
00056757

ASIATIC SOCIETY MUMBAI

This book has been adopted
for conservation
by

Hermès India

A project facilitated by the Rotary Club of Bombay

Digitized with financial assistance from



Hermès India

a project facilitated by the Rotary Club of Bombay

on 12 April, 2019

PREFACE

THE author's acknowledgments are due to the proprietors of *The Field*, *Land and Water*, and *The Asian*, in which publications some of the matter contained in the following pages has appeared.

JUNIOR ARMY AND NAVY CLUB,
ST. JAMES'S STREET,
Sept. 1898.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

JAMAICA

PAGE

Voyage of the *Moselle*—The Azores—Rough Weather—Fatal Accident—A Derelict—Fellow-passengers—Sombrero—The Cradle of our Sea-power—A Procession of Heroes—Rodney's Victory—Nelson—The Spaniards—Buccaneers and Pirates—Henry Morgan—Jamaica Riots—St. Thomas—A Waterspout—Puerto Rico—Haiti and San Domingo—Fires on the Island—Tortuga—Port-au-Prince—A Blood-stained History—Cannibalism—Unfitness of Blacks for Self-government—Jamaica—Fort Augusta—Port Royal—The Panama Canal—Kingston—Up Park Camp—The West India Regiments—Newcastle—The Blue Mountains—Fauna of Jamaica—Game Birds—Spanishtown—Johnny Crow—Other Birds—Rock Fort—Oysters growing on Trees—Sharks—Vendor of Curiosities 1

CHAPTER II

BARBADOS

Voyage of the *Don*—Jacmel—St. Lucia and St. Vincent—Barbados—Physical Features of the Island—Climate—Denizens of the Deep—An Alligator—Bridgetown—The Ice-House—St. Anns Barracks—Behaviour of the Troops—Sir Charles Pearson—Hastings Rocks—The Negroes—Mulattoes—The Sugar Trade—Abolition of Slavery—Hurricanes—Earthquakes—The Winds of God—Sport on the Island—Indigenous Birds—Migratory Birds—Fishing—Voyage to England 21

CHAPTER III

THE PUNJAB

Voyage of the *Rohilla*—Bangalore—Multan—Country and Climate—The City—Murder of two English Officers—

PAGE

Quail-shooting — Grey Cranes — The Chenab — On the March — Shershah — Crossing the River — Ships of the Desert — A Dreary Country — Dera din Pana — Leia — Suleiman Mountains—Duck-shooting—The Indus—Dera Ismael Khan—Sheik Budin — A Mirage — The Kurrum River—Wild-fowl at Narang Serai—Bunnoo—Frontier Robbers—Kohat—The Commander-in-Chief—The Kohat Pass — Peshawar — Climate—Fruit Gardens—The City—The Jhelum Salt Range—Sport on the Cabul River—Sport near Aimal Chabutra — Chamkanni — Extremes of Heat and Cold—Rawal Pindi—Murree—View from the Mountains—Fort Jamrud—A Dust Storm—The Khyber Pass—Colonel Warburton—Historic Ground—Ali Masjid—The Afridis—Landi Kotal—Frontier Warfare—Ferozepore—Native Method of shooting Antelope—Sport on the Sutlej River—Great Bag of Wild Geese—Crocodiles . . . 33

CHAPTER IV

KASHMIR

Journey to Kashmir—Road to Kohala—The Jhelum River—The Happy Valley—The Wular Lake—March up the Mountains—Camp in the Snow—An Avalanche—Moonlight March—Valley of the Kishengunga—Gurais—Ibex—View from a Mountain Pass—Prom Tilail—The Satai Nullah—Bear shot in the Zadgai—Red Bears—Sheep-killing Bear—Bear missed—Keen Scent of Bears—Two Bears seen—Another Bear—Ibex chased by Ounce—Mist on the Mountains—A Mountain Tarn—A Cunning Musk-deer—Four Bears seen—In the Clouds—Snow-leopards . 56

CHAPTER V

KASHMIR—(*continued*)

Charge and Death of a Bear—Ferocity of Bears—Jackal killed by an Ounce—One Bear killed, another missed—Bad Luck—Bear and Cubs sighted—Desperate Climb—Death of two Bears—Bear in a Sheepfold—The Heights above Bernai—A Herd of Ibex—A Bear killed—Night in a Cave—Return to Gurais—Musk-deer—More Bears—Length of Red Bears—Return to the Valley—Black Bear shot at Mullingaon—The Lolab Valley—Voyage to Srinagar—The Venice of the East—Bridges in Srinagar—Horrible Slums—Kashmiris—The Chenar Bagh—Flight of Importunate Merchants—The Dal Lake—Life in a House-boat—Unsuccessful Search for Black Bears—Colonisation of Kashmir—Mountain Villages—The Preservation of Game—Return to India . . . 69

TROPICS AND SNOWS

A RECORD OF TRAVEL AND ADVENTURE

56757

BY

CAPTAIN REGINALD G. BURTON

INDIAN STAFF CORPS

AND LATE OF THE 1ST WEST INDIA REGIMENT

ILLUSTRATED BY MISS CLARE BURTON FROM PHOTOGRAPHS AND FROM SKETCHES BY THE AUTHOR

2x-0-23



LONDON

EDWARD ARNOLD

Publisher to the India Office

37 BEDFORD STREET, STRAND

1898

910.45
Bur/T80
Vol. 1

TO

MY FATHER

GENERAL E. F. BURTON

AUTHOR OF

REMINISCENCES OF SPORT IN INDIA

THIS VOLUME

IS DEDICATED

TROPICS AND SNOWS



A TROPHY OF THE CHASE.

CHAPTER VI

BERAR

PAGE

Geography and History of the Province—The Mahrattas—The Korkus—Malarial Fever—The Hyderabad Contingent—Climate of Berar—Education in India—The Satpura Hills—Game in the Satpuras—Fauna of Berar—Ellichpur—Scorpions and Snakes—Chikalda—Gawilgarh — Extract from Wellington's Despatches — Muktagiri—Antelope-shooting—Great Bustard—Wolves—Man-eating Pack of Wolves—Gazelle-shooting—Barking Deer—Four-horned Antelope—A Jungle Pool 88

CHAPTER VII

BERAR—(*continued*)

Wild Dogs—Panthers near Ellichpur—Habits of Panthers—Methods of shooting them—Death of a Panther—Mode of killing Prey—Man-eating Panthers—A Midnight Vigil—Panther Cub—A Wounded Tigress—Expedition to the Melghat Forest—Charge of a Bear—Death of a Bear and Cub—A Fierce She-Bear—Lesser Civet Cat—Panther shot—Bear visits my Camp—Two Bison shot—Ratels—Bear killed—Panther in the Camp—Wild Dog shot—Watch for a Panther—Eclipse of the Moon—Night Shooting—Bison killed by Tiger—Sand-grouse Shooting—Duck at Darberi Pardis—Cruelty of Natives—Voyage of the *Crocodile*. . 105

CHAPTER VIII

JOURNEY TO RUSSIA—MOSCOW

Return from Exile—Dead Sea Fruit—Voyage of the *Guadalquivir* — Marseilles — Stromboli — Scylla and Charybdis—Etna—The Gulf of Salamis—Quarantine—The Rock of Xerxes — The Acropolis — Quarantine Island — Fellow-passengers — Piræus — Collision with a Greek Vessel—Athens—Visit to the Acropolis—The Areopagus—Stormy Weather—Smyrna—The Dardanelles—The Sea of Marmora—The Golden Horn—Constantinople—The Mosque of St. Sophia—The Bazaar—Pera and Stamboul—The Hall of the Thousand and One Columns—The Bosphorus—The Black Sea—The Isle of Serpents—Odessa—Journey to Moscow—The White City—Life in a Russian Family—Winter in Moscow—The Kremlin—The Belfry of Ivan the Great—The Palace of Arms—The Great Bell—Theatres—Beggars—Skating—The Streets of Moscow—Country Life—The Sparrow Hills—Passports—Entry of Alexander III.—Police Precautions—Plot against the Tzar—Murder of a Nihilist—Student Revolutionists 125

CHAPTER IX

WHITE RUSSIA—RUSSIAN LITERATURE

PAGE

Visit to White Russia—Borodino—Smolensk—Journey in a Sleigh—A Russian Country House—Bieshenkovichy—The Grand Army—Ostrovno—A Centenarian—The Coming of Napoleon—A Russian Estate—The River Dvina—A Drive to the Forest—A Forest Hut—Hunt for Bears—Freedom in Russia—The Jews in Russia—Return to Moscow—The Russian Language—Russian Fictional Literature—Pessimism in Literature—The Press Censor—Characteristics of Russian Fiction—Translations—Dostoevski—Tolstoi—Poushkin the Poet—Lermontoff, his Life and Tragic Death—Turgenev—Gogol—His Description of the Dnieper—Korolenko—The Censorship of the Press—Suppression of Newspapers—Persecution of Turgenev—Effects of the Censorship 145

CHAPTER X

NIJNI-NOVGOROD AND THE VOLGA

Travelling in Russia—Strategical Railways—Hotels—Journey to Nijni-Novgorod—Description of the Market—Tartars—Caucasian Wares—Russian Methods of Dealing—The Town of Nijni-Novgorod—Voyage on a River Steamer—Burning of a Steamer—Sad Death of a Russian General—Tragedy and Comedy—Navigation on the Volga—Scenery—The Djiguli Hills—Moonlight on the Volga—A Solitary Waste—Kazan—Characteristics of the Russian People—Tartars of the Golden Horde—Rafts—Samara—Bandits on the Volga—The Alexandrovski Bridge—Steamer on the Shoals—Saratoff—A Gloomy Hotel—Museum—Tzaritzin—Steppes—A Howling Wilderness—Astrakhan—Fisheries—Fruit—Locusts—Armenians and Persians—Breaking up of the Ice on the Volga 165

CHAPTER XI

SUPERSTITION AND CIVILISATION IN RUSSIA

Superstition among the Peasants—Bacon on Superstition—The Iberian Madonna—The Russian Clergy—Popular Rumours—Strange Stories—A Wicked Witch—Story of the Three Chanticleers—The Russian Peasant—Drunkenness—Strange Marriage Custom—Want of Energy among the Russians—Siberia—Sakhalin—Horrors of the Penal Settlement—Barbarous Act of Superstitious Peasantry—Cholera Riots at Saratoff—Corrupt Administration—Stoppage of the Tzar's Train—Fear of Officials 181

CHAPTER XII

THE COSSACKS IN WAR

PAGE

Origin of the Cossacks—1812—Degeneration and Dragooning—Characteristics of the Cossacks—Inspection by Tzar Nicholas—Russian Press on the Cossacks—Method of raising a Regiment—The Hetman Denisoff—Organisation, Equipment, and Training—Cossack Boyhood—The Cossack *Lava*—The *Venter*—Action at Corelichy—The Golden Epoch of Cossack History—Frays and Forays—Cossacks in Fiction—Action with the Tartars in 1774—Crossing Rivers—Attack on a Polish Position—The *Lava* in action against the Turks—Operations against the French 196

CHAPTER XIII

HINGOLI AND PANTHER-SHOOTING

Hingoli—The Road to Cantonment—The Hot Weather at Hingoli—A Shady Garden—The Khair River—Small Game—Wild-fowl Shooting—Green Pigeons—Panthers—Singhi Ghaut—Dacoits—Panther shot by Night—Bear killed—Ahud Trackers—Panther killed at Oundha—Two Panthers shot at Gadalla—Panther on the Purna River—Put to flight by Wild Bees—Unwillingness of Natives to give Information—A Stern Chase—Panther killed—To the Purna River again—Panther killed with Buckshot—Poona—March to Beder—Beder City and Fort—Fish swallowing Snake and Snipe 212

CHAPTER XIV

BISON-SHOOTING

The Melghat revisited—Drive of One hundred and twenty Miles—Narnala Fort—Camp at Pirkhera—Jungle Sounds—Fine Prospect—A Bull Bison—Wild Dogs—A Herd of Bison—Death of the Bull—A Tigress—A Midnight Vigil—The Construction of a *Machan*—Animal Life at Sunset—Night in the Jungle—Reflections—A Bison by Night—Dawn—Leopard and Hyena—Hyena killed—On the Track of the Bull—Wounded and Lost—A Jet-black Bull—Another Bison—Wounded—On the Blood-trail—Sambhur—A Family of Bears 228

CHAPTER XV

TIGER-SHOOTING

Expedition after Tigers—Decrease of Game—Habitat of Animals—Nature of the Tiger—The Dangers of Tiger-shooting—

PAGE

Wounded Tigers—The Mahore Jungles—Virgin Ground—Camp at Kupti—My Shikaris—Bhima the Bhil—Work of Shikaris—Nuttoo Shikari—Chunder—The Pein Gunga—Haunts of Tigers—Sheik Farid's *Ziarat*—A necessary Ceremony—A Midnight Tragedy—Death of a Tigress—Tiger killed in Chichkora—Tigers and Porcupines—A Hindu Shrine—Denizens of the Jungle—Sacrifices to the Jungle Gods—Blue Bull shot—Tiger killed in the Dili Nullah—Spotted Deer—The Charm of the Jungle—The Voices of the Forest—Cunning Tigers—Ganeshpur—An Empty Beat—Escape of a Tiger near Lhona—Sunstroke—Tigress in the Beat—The Tiger again—Marked down—Death of the Lhona Tiger—March to Dhygaon—Tiger shot at C———Tiger wounded at Pipri—Panther killed—Following a wounded Tiger—Move to Burgaon—A Cannibal Tiger—Recalled to Hingoli 245

CHAPTER XVI

TIGER-SHOOTING—(*continued*)

March to Jalna—Wild Cat and Pea-fowl—Blue Bull killed—The Lake of Lonar—Jalna—Aurungabad—Dowlatabad—Rosa—Ellora—Spearing a Panther—Return to Hingoli—Expedition after Tigers in 1896—Old Haunts—Ceremony at the *Ziarat*—Tigress shot, and Panther missed—Lhona—Examining Kills—Fine Tiger killed at Lhona—Heathen Rites—March to Dhygaon—Wild Dog shot—Cholera—Run after a Tigress—Bear killed—Tigress and Cubs—Spearing a Cobra—At Burgaon again—Telingi Beaters—Tigress escapes—Beat for the Tigress—Flight of the Burghers of Burgaon—Tigress killed by Sepoys—Behaviour of Beaters—Return to Dhygaon—Hunt for the Patoda Tiger—The K——— River—Death of a Tiger and Tigress—The Patoda Tiger killed—His Stronghold—Tigress stalked and shot at Lhona—Buffalo mauled by Tigress—Tigers killing Bears . 274

CHAPTER XVII

WILD ANIMALS—THE LAND OF THE GONDS

Bolarum—Shamiapett—Sunset on the Lake—Panthers near Bolarum—Magistrate's Work—Oriental Veracity—Crime at Hingoli—Panthers and Small Game—Four Days' Shooting—Run after a Bear—Bear missed—Bear killed, and Cubs caught—Death of Man-eating Tiger—Bear shot—She-Bear killed—Tiger and Tigress—Escape of a Tigress—Bear wounded—Fierce Animals—Panther attacks a Man—Officers killed by Wild Beasts—The Land of the Gonds—

PAGE

Habits of the Gonds — Description of their Country — Timidity of Aborigines—Indru the Gond—A *Terra Incognita*—Bad Water—Untruthfulness of the Gonds—Superstitions—The Gond Rajah—Reputed Man-eater — Aboriginal Hunters—The Rajah's Domain—A Jungle Elysium —Native Officials—Narrow Escape of the Rajah—Gond Customs and Superstitions—The Tiger God—Famine and Drought—Jubilee Rejoicings 292

CHAPTER XVIII

TIGER-SHOOTING

Expedition after Tigers in 1897—Camp at Kupti again—Effect of Drought—A Useless Beat—Tigress in Chichkora—Narrow Escape of Nuttoo—Spotted Deer-shooting—Tigress shot above Lhona — Empty Beat — Eluding the Forest Guards—A Tiger killed—Young Panther shot—Death of a Tigress—Horse attacked by Colic—Tiger killed above C—— —Tigers in the K—— River—Camp at S—— —Ten Blank Days—Lakes, Game, and Wild-fowl—Tigress shot— I miss a Tigress—A Fruitless Night Watch—Death of a Tiger—Tiger shot at K—— —Gond Women and Tiger— A Cunning Tigress — March across the Mountains—Old Tiger and Tigress killed—Another Tigress shot—Tiger killed at S—— —Our Last Tiger—Game Preservation— The killing of Tiger Cubs—The Length of Tigers . . 313

CHAPTER XIX

A MONTH IN NORWAY

Voyage to Europe — Brindisi — Naples — Pompeii — Rome — Voyage to Norway—Travelling in Norway—Bergen—The Sogn Fjord—Vadheim—Sande—The Viks Lake—Trout in Norway — A Fisherman's Cottage — Norwegian Hotels— Langeland—Ferde Hafstadt—Timber in Norway—Nedre Vasenden—A Land of no Night—The Jolster Lake and River—Voyage to Skei—The Great Jolster Glacier— Fishing at Skei—The Bredheim Lake—Sombre Scenery— Absence of *Fauna*—Great Lake Trout—"Otters"—The Sandals Lake—The Red River—A Wonderful Valley— Remnants of the Glacial Epoch—Moraines—Red—Return Journey—Character of the Norwegians 335

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	PAGE
A Trophy of the Chase	*Frontispiece*
On the Coast of Barbados	20
A Herd of Ibex	60
Himalayan Bear and Cubs	73
Panther and Kill	107
A Russian Troika	150
Cossacks	196
Chunder and Nuttoo, Shikaris	253
A Tiger in the Beat	280
Black Bear and Cubs	296
The Rajah's Domain	307
One of our Buffaloes was killed	328

TROPICS AND SNOWS

CHAPTER I

JAMAICA

Voyage of the *Moselle*—The Azores—Rough Weather—Fatal Accident—A Derelict—Fellow-Passengers—Sombrero—The Cradle of our Sea-power—A Procession of Heroes—Rodney's Victory—Nelson—The Spaniards—Buccaneers and Pirates—Henry Morgan—Jamaica Riots—St. Thomas—A Waterspout—Puerto Rico—Haiti and San Domingo—Fires on the Island—Tortuga—Port-au-Prince—A bloodstained History—Cannibalism—Unfitness of Blacks for Self-government—Jamaica—Fort Augusta—Port Royal—The Panama Canal—Kingston—Up Park Camp—The West India Regiments—Newcastle—The Blue Mountains—Fauna of Jamaica—Game Birds—Spanishtown—Johnny Crow—Other Birds—Rock Fort—Oysters growing on Trees—Sharks—Vendor of Curiosities.

On the 2nd April 1885 I left England for the first time, having embarked on board the *Moselle* at Southampton, bound for Jamaica, where the corps to which I had been posted, the 1st West India Regiment, was stationed. Our ship was perhaps the finest of a fine line of steamers, the Royal Mail Steam Navigation Company, and was as comfortable and luxurious as the most fastidious traveller could desire. This vessel was some years afterwards totally

wrecked off the coast of South America—I believe near Colon. There had been heavy storms for some time previous to our departure, and we came in for the edge of a hurricane; but after a few days of very rough weather we fortunately passed beyond the Azores into calm and unruffled seas. The storm had, however, claimed a victim; for one of the stewards lost his footing during its progress, and, falling down a hatchway, fractured his skull, and was killed on the spot.

During the early part of our voyage we saw many evidences of the late storm, in the shape of broken spars and other wreckage, among which the dismasted hull of a small derelict schooner especially attracted our attention. Our steamer slackened speed on nearing the wreck, but it was evidently deserted, and there was no sign of life on board; the boats were gone, so it was hoped that the crew might have escaped in them.

My fellow-passengers were not altogether interesting. They comprised a Jamaica planter, who was rather too fond of cocktails; a dockyard official, who also required an "eye-opener" every morning before breakfast; a mining engineer, bound for Peru; a youth just escaped from school, who was going to the United States of Colombia with the hope of making a fortune in the silver mines; and four yellow Mexican boys returning to Vera Cruz from school in England. There was also a German doctor engaged on a scientific mission to Cuba, who was much struck with the beauty of the ebony belles of St. Thomas.

After passing the Azores no land was seen for

ten days, when the small island of Sombrero, so called from its shape, was sighted. It is but a barren rock, sometimes temporarily inhabited by fishermen from the neighbouring islands; but the sight of even such land was welcomed as a break in the monotony of an uneventful voyage, when the principal amusement consisted in watching the flying-fish, and catching with improvised grapnels the seaweed brought from the Sargasso Sea by the current of the Gulf Stream. We were now well within the historic waters of the Caribbean Sea, the cradle of the sea power of Great Britain. Looking back through the mist of time on the splendid and romantic history of the past, a ghostly procession of mighty men passes before the mind's eye—an array of heroes who contributed so much to the building up of that great empire on which the sun never sets. There were Frobisher and Raleigh and Drake, and crowds of buccaneers—pirates and patriots—the men who humbled the power of Spain on these seas, who took her galleons and ravaged her colonies, thus establishing in the fair islands of the Caribbean Sea the basis of the British Empire.

Following these great men, other giants appear in the kaleidoscope of history, and many shadow-shapes, pale phantoms of the past, come and go—Rodney, who, by the utter destruction of the French fleet on 12th April 1782, ensured the ascendency of Great Britain in these islands, once the brightest jewels in the British crown, but now, alas! from various causes, fallen from their high estate.

Then Nelson and Collingwood passed across

these seas again and again, and finally sailed hence to gain the culminating victory of Trafalgar, which, although resulting in the death of the greatest of England's sons, contributed so much towards the downfall of Napoleon, and the successful issue of the struggle of Europe against his domination.

But there is another side to the picture. First came the Spaniards, with their iniquitous inquisition and other methods of conversion, by means of which they converted the harmless Caribs off the face of the earth. They brought fire and sword in their train. I know not if they also brought rum, or its equivalent in those days, as do our modern missionaries in other parts of the world, where they appear to be the forerunners of a similar conversion or extinction. After the Spaniards followed the buccaneers and pirates, Spanish, French, and English, who held high revel at Port Royal, where also the gallows-trees bore a heavy crop of human fruit. Nor must we forget Henry Morgan, buccaneer and patriot, who captured Panama and governed Jamaica. And to finish the dark page of history, in modern times happened the unfortunate Jamaica riots—a sad story, more of mistake than crime, ending in the shameful death of the insurgent Gordon, and the consequent disgrace of the hapless Eyre.

But enough of history. On the morning of 15th April we entered the beautiful little harbour of St. Thomas, our first anchorage, and lay-to about a quarter of a mile from the shore. The harbour is almost landlocked, and consequently provides a safe refuge from the storms that sometimes rage in this part of the Atlantic; for the wind may blow ever so

fiercely without, but the waves beat in vain against the lofty rocks, standing like sentinels over the harbour, within which reigns eternal calm. The town of St. Thomas is picturesquely built on the slope of a mountain, stretching down to the low, sandy shore; the white houses, nestling among feathery palm-trees and deep green bananas, look very pretty with their red roofs and green jalousies.

The ship was no sooner at anchor than it was surrounded by a yelling crowd of negroes, some plying their boats for hire to take the passengers ashore; others offering fruit, vegetables, curiosities, and various other articles for sale; whilst diving-boys, in defiance of sharks, performed feats rivalling even those of the Somalis at Aden.

After being fought for by a struggling mass of boatmen, some of us succeeded in getting into a dinghy, and were pulled to the shore by the lusty blacks. Having a few hours to spare, we proceeded to the market-place, where sugar-cane, mangoes, plantains, cocoanuts, and other tropical fruits were exposed for sale. Then we went to the ice-house, where sherry-cobblers and other American drinks were dispensed; but on the whole there was little of interest to be seen. St. Thomas was at this time a port of call for the steamers of the Royal Mail Company, where mails and passengers were transhipped for some of the other islands, and for Demerara; but this route has since been abandoned, and Barbados is now the port of call. It was noticeable that the greater part of the trade of St. Thomas appeared to be in English hands, although the island is a Danish possession.

Shortly after leaving the harbour we observed a great waterspout in the distance, but it was visible only for a few seconds. Rising from the sea like a pillar of dark cloud, the tall column of water joined the ocean to the vault of heaven, stood wavering for some seconds, and then, suddenly collapsing, melted away in the waste of waters.

At night some mild excitement was obtained in watching the revolving light of Puerto Rico, for even such an insignificant incident is of sufficient interest to break the monotony of life on board ship.

On the 16th April, soon after sunrise, we sighted the shores of Hispaniola, the island containing the black republics of Haiti and San Domingo. At first the sierras appeared dimly blue in the morning mist, but as we approached the mountains became clearer, the mist disappeared, and the tall rocks, although some miles distant, seemed to stand close ahead in the deep blue waters of the Caribbean Sea. The hills, rising from fertile plains, green savannahs, and miasmatic swamps, were clothed with mahogany, ebony, and other trees. Down the valleys rushed foaming torrents, now lost to view in dark gorges and thick brushwood, anon reappearing, and leaping from height to height, until they sped away to water the stretching plains below, where they disappeared in the luxuriance of the tropical vegetation.

The rocky cliffs stood up on a stretch of golden sand, fringed with lines of palm-trees. At night the vessel steamed along close inshore, and a scorching wind, hot as a blast from Hades, was borne towards us across the phosphorescent waves. The mountains loomed black against the starlit sky, and innumer-

able fires burned amid their rocky fastnesses. In all directions there blazed the mysterious flames; perhaps they were kindled in honour of Mumbo Jumbo and Obi, the gods of the heathen, for the people are given to idolatry, and are fast relapsing into barbarism.

Perchance the natives were cooking some of their own kind, for they are said to be, in some parts, addicted to cannibalism. We were, however, too far off to distinguish any odour of burnt flesh. No scent, save that of the tropic woods with their fragrant spices, was wafted towards us from the rocky shore of Hispaniola; no sound was heard, save the ceaseless breaking of the surf on the adjacent shore.

Morning broke, and found us still steaming along the coast. We passed through a narrow channel, between Haiti and the small island of Tortuga. The latter was in former times a great stronghold of the buccaneers, who used to collect their ill-gotten spoil for concealment on this island, where, tradition says, some treasure still lies hidden. During the whole day we passed along this coast, with its strips of sand fringed with palm-trees and cactus. A varied landscape presented itself to our view. Wild forest-clad mountains rose tier upon tier in theatral majesty; green savannahs, covered with long prairie grass, stretched like an undulating sea of emerald, in the midst of which appeared here and there a village, or a small patch of cultivation.

In the early morning of the third day from St. Thomas we entered a long, narrow bay, the Bight of Leogane, an arm of the sea, whose unruffled

waters were crimsoned by the rays of the rising sun. On either side were the usual sandy shores and cocoanut palms, whilst above rose bush-covered mountains, sloping gently to the sand. Passing some small mangrove-covered islands, on one of which stood an insignificant stone fort, we anchored at the head of the bay, not far from the Haitian navy, which consisted of one small man-of-war. In a hollow in front of us, between two hills, lay the town of Port-au-Prince, a long, crowded city, formed of ruined huts and squalid habitations, relieved here and there by some tall church spire or public building, appearing curiously incongruous amid the surroundings. I was unable to land here, and, after staying about an hour, we left the bay, and coasted along that seemingly peaceful shore—so peaceful, so still, that the silent woods seemed to be wrapped in everlasting slumber. Yet these woods often resound with the clash of arms, for an internecine struggle frequently rages, and those deep forests and green savannahs have often been incarnadined with blood. It is a sad contrast—the beauty of the land, and its unfortunate and bloodstained history—a history that proves how unfitted the negro is for self-government.

These two black republics of Haiti and San Domingo formerly belonged to France and Spain respectively. Many years ago the blacks rose and massacred the whites. Now the negroes govern the country after their own fashion, and the whites are the down-trodden race—a curious reversal of the usual order of things. But the republics, begun with savage bloodshed, have not prospered, and

the government of this island is a blot on the face of creation. The inhabitants are barbarians and idolaters, with a thin veneer of civilisation and Christianity. They have relapsed into the practice of African heathen rites, which include human sacrifices and cannibalism. Such crimes are perpetrated with impunity in Haiti and San Domingo.

Such is this fair land, one of the most beautiful islands of the earth, gifted by nature with all things, where the only wild beasts that haunt the forests are those in human form.

The negroes are not improved by freedom, but rather are liable to drift back into the black depths of barbarism, from which they have scarcely emerged.

Those who would attempt to govern black people in the same manner as the white would do well to pause and study the bloodstained history of Hispaniola, and glance at that island as it now is. Government should be adapted to the characteristics of a race, and its methods should be varied accordingly. It is no use attempting to apply a constitution like that of England either to the East or the West Indies. History has proved that both the negroes and the natives of India are unfit to govern themselves. They must be ruled, and, when necessary, ruled with an iron hand.

At daybreak on 19th April, seventeen days after leaving Southampton, we sighted Jamaica, and at eight o'clock in the morning the gun announced our arrival outside the wharf at Kingston. From a distance the first sight of Jamaica is pleasing. The Blue Mountains, veiled in a thin mist, rise to

a great height, apparently out of the sea itself; but nearer approach reveals a long, low-lying shore, with the usual fringe of palm-trees. Then come the palisades clothed with mangroves, and below them the rippling waves wash the sands below Rock Fort and Fort Augusta. The latter occupies an excellent tactical position, commanding, as it does, the entrance to the harbour; but the mangrove swamps in the vicinity render it too unhealthy for effective occupation, and it is now used as a magazine, and manned only by a few men of the West India Regiment. Formerly considerable bodies of troops were stationed there, and many valuable lives were lost owing to the deadly surroundings of the place.

In entering Kingston harbour the vessel passes Port Royal, situated on the end of the strip of land called the Palisades, famous in the history of the Spanish Main in the good old fighting days of Drake and his contemporaries. Once the most important place in the West Indies, Port Royal is now comparatively insignificant, its glories having departed since its destruction by the great earthquake in 1692.

When I was in Jamaica considerable works were in progress at Port Royal, which was being strengthened with fortifications, and armed with guns of modern type. Perhaps this activity was due to the progress of the Panama Canal, which was then in course of construction, and appeared to have some chance of being completed.

Thousands were flocking to the fatal isthmus from all ports of the Caribbean Sea, lured to that

deadly holocaust by the high pay offered for their labour. But in that sink of fever and iniquity most of them would meet their doom, for, where thousands went, only hundreds returned.

Had the construction of the canal been completed, Jamaica would undoubtedly have become a most important place; and Port Royal, whose glory had departed with the buccaneers, might have recovered some of its pristine prosperity. But the canal was a gigantic failure, and its remains are now but the monument over the grave of many men's honour, and the memorial of more men's deaths.

From the steamer I drove to Up Park Camp, where my corps, the 1st West India Regiment, was stationed. On the way I passed through Kingston, about a mile and a half from the barracks. Kingston is a well laid-out town. All the principal streets lead down to the sea, so that the breeze blows clear along them, but the system of drainage was at that time very defective. A large part of the town was burnt down by a great fire in 1882, and much of it was still uninhabited, with only blackened ruins remaining where there had once been populous streets.

Up Park Camp, where the West India Regiment is always quartered, is situated on a slight eminence in the middle of a clear savannah, or open tract of ground. Its open situation does not render it immune from diseases such as yellow and typhoid fevers. The former scourge is in every way the most terrible, and is almost endemic in Port Royal.

The barracks at Up Park Camp are well-built and airy, and afford excellent accommodation for

the men. There were in my time two West India regiments, each of which passed a tour of three years in the West Indies and on the West Coast of Africa alternately. The regiment on the coast also supplied a detachment of three companies to Barbados, whilst that in the West Indies garrisoned Honduras and the Bahamas as well as Jamaica. The negroes of these regiments present a fine appearance in their picturesque Zouave uniform. They are sober and well-behaved, and are said to fight well; but it was not my fortune to see any active service with them. On more than one occasion they have fought excellently, both in Africa and in the West Indies. One famous fight—the repulse of an Indian attack on Orange Walk in Honduras in 1872 by a detachment of the 1st West India Regiment under Lieutenant Graham Smith—is worthy of a foremost place in the history of gallant deeds of warfare, whilst individual negroes in West Africa have gained the Victoria Cross.

My company was commanded by Major Ellis, a brave and able soldier, who attained to some distinction when commanding the regiment in West Africa a few years afterwards, and who would doubtless have become famous had he not unhappily perished, at a comparatively early age, from the effects of the deadly climate.

The stations are generally unhealthy, and of other officers who were there with me few are now left. Death has claimed many on the deadly West African coast, and others have exchanged into British regiments; for few care to serve all their lives in those undesirable parts of the globe, where

there has hitherto been so little chance of gaining distinction.

The British troops in Jamaica then consisted of a detachment of the North Staffordshire Regiment, whose headquarters were at Barbados. They were quartered at Newcastle—those white huts seen from afar off high up on the slope of the Blue Mountains. There they enjoyed a comparatively salubrious climate, although I believe the station is not entirely exempt from occasional visitations of yellow fever; whilst it is so lonely and its situation is such that the soldiers have absolutely no means of recreation, and live under conditions that cannot be otherwise than demoralising. One reaches Newcastle by a winding road up the mountains, through beautiful scenery above the valley of the Hope River. About half-way up the mountains is the somewhat squalid settlement of Gordon's Town. Looking back now through the vista of many years, the Blue Mountains of Jamaica appear to me dimly outlined through the mist of time, but the recollection of happy days spent on the island still remains deeply impressed upon my memory. As the island lies so near the Equator, the plains have a very torrid climate, but the surrounding waters of the Caribbean Sea tend in some degree to temper the heat. The higher uplands of the mountains, which culminate in Blue Mountain Peak and rise to a height of 14,000 feet above sea-level, possess a pleasant and salubrious climate, resembling in some respects that of the Himalayan slopes, without the rigours of a northern winter.

In those days I used to find a delight in climb-

ing some high peak of the lofty range of hills, and looking down on the slopes covered with luxuriant vegetation, with giant cotton, ebony, and mahogany trees, with creepers and plants, and bright-hued flowers of a hundred kinds, and with beautiful ferns amidst which ever and anon might be caught the gleam of a rushing mountain torrent. And then lower down lay deep, cool valleys with precipitous sides. At times a fleecy cloud would sweep across and obscure the view, except where some loftier peak raised itself above the clouds, appearing like an island in mid-air, constantly changing its form as the mist swept round it in fantastic shapes. And farther yet, on a clear day could be seen the plains shimmering in a pall of heat, and stretching away to meet the sapphire sea beyond. On a rough day the sea could be distinguished breaking into foam where the waves beat in vain against the rocks of Fort Augusta and on the Palisades, where Port Royal lay on the extremity of the tongue of land that jutted out into the sea and formed Kingston harbour. The tangled bush and luxuriant undergrowth, so thick and entangled that at times one had to cut one's way through it with a *machete*, teemed with the exuberant bird and insect life of the tropics. Gorgeous butterflies flitted in the glades on purple and azure wings, floating from blossom to blossom scarcely less gorgeous than themselves. Humming-birds of many kinds and brightest hues fluttered incessantly their tiny wings as they hovered from flower to flower, changing their colour with every movement as the sunlight caught their metallic plumage. There were some little green ones with

white throats, scarcely larger than a bee, which swarmed in large numbers round the upper shoots of the bamboo clumps. Others of larger size had sapphire-coloured throats, and long curved beaks which they continually thrust into the flowers, and some appeared to be of a dull brown colour until the sunlight struck them, when they flashed with purple and green and gold.

The little Jamaica robin, dressed in a garb of emerald green with a bright red breast, was also a common bird; and there were many others—blue and green and yellow—too numerous to mention. Of game birds there were but few. Quail were at one time plentiful, but have nearly all been destroyed by the mongoose, which was introduced from India to kill the rats, but preferred game to vermin. Quail had become so scarce that I do not recollect having seen any during my residence of nearly a year on the island; whilst the guinea-fowl, formerly so numerous as to afford good sport, had almost disappeared. There were also pigeons and doves of various kinds. The pigeons used to fly in towards evening from an outlying island, and sometimes a great many were slain in organised battues, the sportsmen waiting towards sunset for the arrival of the flight of birds.

I must not omit to mention the duck and snipe, said to be fairly numerous in the Spanishtown marshes. These miasmatic swamps, formed by the River Cobre, are so deadly that the game is not worth the risk incurred in its pursuit. I recollect how a naval officer belonging to H.M.S. *Urgent*, the guardship at Port Royal, died of yellow fever within

twenty-four hours of his return from a day's shooting in these marshes. In addition to those already mentioned, some migratory birds, golden and grey plover, used to visit the island in the autumn,—and that makes up the list of the game birds of Jamaica.

However, there were some other birds of interest. There was the ubiquitous turkey-buzzard, commonly called the Johnny Crow, which, hovering and wheeling in circles overhead, is one of the first objects that attracts the attention of the observant traveller in Jamaica. His dark brown body and red vulture-like head are seen everywhere. He alights on the tops of the masts in the harbour; he is almost domesticated in the gardens, and he soars, a black speck in the azure sky, over the peaks of the Blue Mountain range. He is not ornamental, but is a very useful bird, for he is the best of scavengers, and therefore of great utility in a country where a fowl of his trade finds plenty of occupation. It was not a pleasant sight, but a very satisfactory one, to see a number of these creatures clearing away the offal with which the streets of Kingston abounded, and the noise they made when quarrelling over their unsavoury banquet was something to be remembered. The Johnny Crow has his faults. He has an objectionable habit of sleeping on the roof of one's house, and half his night seems to be passed in tumbling down the tiles and clambering up again. Where the turkey-buzzard breeds was a mystery that had not then been elucidated; but probably their nests are built in the rocky fastnesses of the mountains, or on the uninhabited islands of these seas. On one occasion I saw the corpse of one beside a dead

donkey, on which he had been regaling himself; perhaps the unwonted feast—for who has ever seen a dead donkey?—was too much for him. His brethren did not take warning from his fate, nor did they respect their deceased companion, for they continued their feast on the donkey as if nothing had happened, and probably did not stick at cannibalism when they had finished that, but completed their festivities by demolishing the carcase of their unfortunate comrade. At any rate he was gone when next I passed the place, and nothing remained of the donkey except the white bones glistening in the sun.

Besides these birds there were the mosquito-hawks, a kind of night-jar that twittered incessantly overhead when they emerged at sunset in search of their insect prey. And on the sea-shore might be seen great brown pelicans and pied kingfishers, and sometimes flights of sandpipers, or solitary terns and sea-gulls. There are very few mammals in the forests of Jamaica. In fact, besides wild pigs, which are somewhat scarce, I remember seeing only the mongoose and rats, and several species of bat.

The rivers abound in a fish called the mountain mullet, which affords good sport, and is excellent for the table. The fishing takes one to the most beautiful scenery among the mountains, where foaming torrents flow rapidly down the ravines, forming frequent cascades overhung with beautiful shrubs. There was one particularly fine waterfall in the Hope River where we used to bathe sometimes. The stream flows swiftly down a lovely glen overgrown with ferns and creepers of various kinds, until it

reaches a precipitous and rocky declivity whence it falls sheer into the valley below, forming a broad deep pool, shaded by giant trees and thick bushes from the rays of the tropic sun. Nor were the hills alone worth a visit. Towards Rock Fort, an ancient edifice fast crumbling to dust, a pleasant ride may be taken along the sea-shore, where the waves break with ceaseless murmur on a stretch of white sand. Here were clumps of mangroves, to which small oysters clung when the tide receded; hence the traveller's tale about the oysters that grow on trees. On the moss-grown banks above the sand, green lizards with ruby eyes darted about in the sunshine, and the land-crabs scuttled away to their holes on the approach of the intruder. And in the bay one might frequently see sharks and porpoises and bonitos, whilst sometimes a silver shower of flying-fish rose from the rippled surface and dropped into the sea again after accomplishing a short flight.

I often saw the dorsal fin of a shark quite close to the shore near Rock Fort, and this deterred me from bathing, although the pellucid depths looked most inviting. But sharks around the Jamaica coast are rapacious and bloodthirsty. On one occasion three sailors went ashore in a boat from a man-of-war lying in Port Royal harbour. They started back for their ship after sunset, but never reached it. Next morning the boat was discovered floating in the harbour, containing the dreadfully-mangled corpse of one of the sailors. His comrades had disappeared, and it was supposed that the boat had capsized and that two of the sailors had been devoured by the sharks, whilst the third managed to

right the boat and scramble back into it, only to die there of the wounds received in his encounter with the monsters of the deep.

A great character in Jamaica was the vendor of curiosities called "tick-tief," a corruption of the words stick-thief—a name our friend had earned because he was said to be in the habit of going round the officers' quarters and stealing the sticks he had himself sold to them. It was his trade to provide the collector with ebony and other sticks, and with various curious articles. Objects wonderful, beautiful, and rare, delightful alike to the eye of the naturalist and of the collector of curios, had a place among his wares. He had cocoanuts and gourds carved in grotesque and curious forms; necklaces and bracelets made of crabs' eyes and sapodilla seeds; artificial flowers constructed of fishes' scales; stuffed humming-birds of gorgeous hues—emerald-coloured, ruby-throated, and sapphire-crested; porcupine fish; huge bull-frogs covered with thick coats of varnish; flying-fish stuffed with sawdust; primitive shell-chisels used by the aboriginal Caribs, long since exterminated;—such were a few of the most notable of "tick-tief's" treasures.

The experienced collector of curios may buy all these for very little, and can start a small museum at the cost of a few dollars. But he must know the ways of the wily dealer, who always demands at least four times their value for his goods; so that it requires some bargaining to come to terms. He used to board every steamer that came into the harbour, bearing his bundle of sticks and his basket of treasures; and then, woe betide the passenger who

was visiting the island for the first time and was eager to obtain some of its curious productions. Imagine his disgust when he subsequently discovered that he had purchased for dollars what he might have obtained for cents. This merchant had his counterpart in Barbados, and doubtless in most of the other islands also. He was a jolly fellow. He used to sit in the verandah outside my room and spread out all his wares on the floor, laughing and joking the while, and when he went away he would say dolefully, "Massa make very hard bargain."

Nevertheless, he would go with a merry twinkle in his eye, and with his huge mouth stretched from ear to ear, so that it seemed on the whole as if the bargain had not been very hard on him. He evidently thought me a good customer, and bore me no ill-will, for on my departure from the island he presented me with two carved calabashes, and I really thought a tear glistened in the corner of his dark eye as we made our last bargain on board the ship that was to take me to Barbados.



ON THE COAST OF BARBADOS.

CHAPTER II

BARBADOS

Voyage of the *Don*—Jacmel—St. Lucia and St. Vincent—Barbados—Physical Features of the Island—Climate—Denizens of the Deep—An Alligator—Bridgetown—The Ice-House—St. Anns Barracks—Behaviour of the Troops—Sir Charles Pearson—Hastings Rocks—The Negroes—Mulattoes—The Sugar Trade—Abolition of Slavery—Hurricanes—Earthquakes—The Winds of God—Sport on the Island—Indigenous Birds—Migratory Birds—Fishing—Voyage to England.

My regiment had in the meantime been ordered to the West Coast of Africa, and the headquarters had left for Sierra Leone in November, but I was fortunate enough to escape the pestilent climate of the White Man's Grave, being sent to join a detachment of two companies of the regiment at Barbados.

It was not entirely without regret that I embarked on board the *Don* on 6th January 1886, bound for Barbados. The voyage of four days on a calm sea was an uneventful one. We coasted along the northern shore of Haiti, and touched only at the port of Jacmel on the way. Jacmel is a somewhat insignificant town, picturesquely situated on a small hill sloping down to the sea. On either side of the town are low hills, and beyond it rises a lofty range of wooded mountains. The place appeared to contain some fine buildings, notably a large church with a tall spire.

We passed within sight of St. Lucia and St. Vincent, but the land could only be dimly discerned. I had, unfortunately, no opportunity of visiting these places St. Vincent is a well-wooded island, very similar in its characteristics to others of the Antilles. It is notable in that it was the last stronghold of the Caribs until civilisation brought about their extinction.

St. Lucia is a very beautiful island, inhabited principally by negroes, yellow fever germs, and the deadly serpent called the fer-de-lance. It was not then a military station, but I was told that there still remained traces of our former occupation of it in the shape of extensive but dilapidated barracks and an old fort. These have doubtless been rebuilt, for the island is now garrisoned by our troops.

On the fourth day we reached Barbados, and anchored in Carlisle Bay. Here we were boarded by a big negress named Jane Ann, who was quite a celebrity in the West Indies. She was laundress to the crews of nearly all the ships that came into the harbour, and had, in addition, a great reputation for skill in making guava jelly and other condiments.

Barbados is sometimes termed the little England of the West Indies, from the somewhat English appearance of its landscapes. Certainly, were it not for the black inhabitants, the plumed cocoa-nut palms that fringe the tropic shore, the bearded trees from which the island is said to take its name, and the sun that beats so fiercely overhead, the aspect of the place would not on the whole

be far different from that of a strip of the southern coast of Britain.

This is due in some measure to the fact that the greater portion of it is under cultivation, leaving but little of that luxuriant tropical vegetation, those wondrous and fantastic-shaped plants and bright-hued flowers, that form the principal features of most of the islands of the Caribbean Sea.

Of all the West India islands Barbados is perhaps the most advanced, and its civilised blacks regard the rustic inhabitants of Jamaica with undeserved contempt. Generally speaking, the Jamaicans are, in point of industry, as well as in most other respects, a race far preferable to their Barbadian brethren. The climate of Barbados is not as trying as that of the other islands, although it is situated so near the Equator. Probably its small extent, surrounded by sea, tends to the prevalence of a more equable temperature than that of the Jamaica lowlands. Nevertheless, the place is not altogether healthy, and it has sometimes suffered severely from epidemics of yellow fever. Soon after my arrival on the island, when I had just recovered from a three months' illness from typhoid fever in Jamaica, I experienced a sharp attack of malarial fever, which almost put an end to my further peregrinations.

In addition to the palms, the bearded trees, and the negroes, we find here other denizens of the tropical world. Bright humming-birds of different species to those found in Jamaica are common. In the sea, whose deep green and sapphire blue are wonderful to behold, deep down in the emerald

depths where the branching coral grows, may be seen strange-shaped fish, some—the sea porcupines —of globular form, covered with short, sharp spikes, like the bristles of a hedgehog; some with great unwieldy heads attached to diminutive bodies. Shoals of flying-fish pursued by bonitos skim the surface, flash in the sunlight, and drop back into the water like a falling shower of silver. Occasionally a whale may be seen to spout in the offing; and I recollect how an alligator was shot on the shore near St. Anns, and afterwards exhibited in Bridgetown at twelve cents a head for admission. The ill-fated saurian had probably been driven by stormy weather from Trinidad or the Guiana coast, and so wave-washed to the inhospitable shore of Barbados.

Bridgetown, the capital of Barbados, was in those days an unclean place, overcrowded and ill-built, with narrow streets and lanes. The public buildings were fine, but appeared out of place amid their squalid surroundings. Near the bridge across Indian River is Trafalgar Square, a fine open space where a statue of Nelson serves to remind one of the great past in the departed palmy days of the West Indies. In the streets one sees people of every shade of colour—ebony black, brown, yellow, and sometimes even piebald.

A popular resort in Bridgetown was the ice-house, a refreshment-room where cocktails, sangarees, and other American drinks of a seductive but deadly character, were dispensed. Occasionally an ice-ship used to come in from New York with oysters, lager beer, and other luxuries, and then

the white people flocked in large numbers to the ice-house.

St. Anns barracks were built all round an open plain called the Savannah, which served as a parade-ground, a racecourse, and a polo-ground. My quarters looked out over the sea, and I could see from my window the signal-point, so soon learnt to distinguish the various flags which were run up to signal the approach of different ships. When I first arrived at the barracks the ceaseless chorus of song raised by the tree-frogs in the evening seemed deafening; but one soon becomes used to these noises that disturb the silence of a tropic night, and after a few days the nocturnal orchestra is not even noticeable.

The negro soldiers of the West India regiments are generally well-behaved, and very little addicted to drink. At times, however, they break out. When I was in Jamaica a feud arose between the men of my regiment and the police, and reprisals were carried out on both sides. The negroes on such occasions are given to arming themselves with razors tied on sticks, and for this reason the soldiers are not allowed to shave. *A propos* of this regulation, I heard of an amusing incident that occurred at Belize, in Honduras. One of the men of the detachment stationed there was suspected of having shaved, an offence involving severe punishment. The commanding officer sent the man to the medical officer with a request for his opinion on the subject. The indignant medico replied to the effect that it was not his business to report on such a matter, as the professions of

surgeon and barber were not combined nowadays as they were in the Middle Ages.

When I was in Barbados the troops were commanded by Sir Charles Pearson, a distinguished general, who will be remembered as the gallant officer who commanded the force at Ekowe during the brave defence of that fort against the Zulus in 1879.

Besides polo and lawn-tennis there was not much in the way of recreation in Barbados. The climate was too enervating to leave one much energy for walking; but in the evening, especially on Sundays, we generally used to walk to Hastings Rocks, a pleasant resort by the sea, where there was a stretch of green turf, and beyond it an expanse of sand fringed with cocoanut palms. At Hastings a very large hotel had been built, but had never been opened, and there seemed little prospect of its being a success.

The negroes, both of Jamaica and Barbados, deserve some notice in an account of these islands. The plantation negro of the present day is generally a quiet and sober fellow, doing only enough work to earn his living, and leading a lazy life, basking in the sun like a great lizard for the greater part of the day. Sometimes he breaks out, but only on such occasions as a wedding, a wake, or a dignity ball; and then much rum, and not infrequently a little blood also, is spilt. These entertainments are kept up until sunrise, and towards morning Sambo and Quashie become so uproarious that the police have sometimes to be called in to disperse the wedding or funeral party as the case may be.

The negroes are mostly Christians, and are very religious after their own fashion. It is a common thing to see a labourer going along the road with a herd of cattle or a load of sugar-cane, bawling hymns at the top of his voice, and occasionally interrupting the sacred strain to curse his cattle or mules.

These people have apparently attained to a considerable degree of civilisation; yet few of them trouble to go through the ceremony of matrimony, and I have heard it averred that seventy-five per cent. of the population is illegitimate. The negroes of Barbados all work on the sugar estates, and are dependent on them for their livelihood. They have no little holdings of their own, like the blacks on most of the other islands. Therefore the ruin of the sugar planters would involve the destitution of their employés also. The blacks are a vast majority in Barbados, as in all the other islands. To what might they not be driven by starvation? The blacks of Haiti massacred the French and set up a government of their own.

The old days of prosperity, when the Barbadian gentlemen could live in affluence and luxury, waned with the abolition of slavery. And with the decline of the sugar trade came the almost complete ruin of the landowners. Whilst in Barbados I was conducted all over one of the finest sugar estates on the island: new machinery had just been put up at great cost. Formerly the income from the estate had amounted to many thousands a year. Now it was worth scarcely as many hundreds. Barbados is perhaps worse off than many of the other islands, for it is entirely dependent on sugar. But in

Jamaica, for instance, there are other industries such as fruit, tobacco, and pimento-growing. The negro women do as much work as the men. They are fine, strapping wenches, beautifully made, and walk very upright with a stately gait, due to their habit of carrying loads on their heads. In the West Indies the people of lighter colour—mulattoes, quadroons, octoroons—are looked up to, and take precedence according to the degree of fairness of their complexions. This is different to the case in the East Indies, where the half-caste is more an object of contempt among both natives and Europeans. The infusion of white blood does not appear to have a deteriorating effect on the negro as it has in the case of the Oriental. The Eurasian is generally a poor creature, both mentally and physically, combining the worst attributes of both races, but the mulatto of the West Indies has usually infinitely more intelligence than the negro, and is his equal in physique. This fact is noticeable in the case of the soldiers of the West India regiments, or was in my time, when pure negroes formed the minority of the non-commissioned officers.

Barbados possesses few natural features of marked beauty. The island is generally flat, and has no mountains, only a few insignificant hills. Some of the deep gullies or watercourses are picturesque, but the country is nearly all under cultivation, and lacks that rugged grandeur which is characteristic of San Domingo and Jamaica.

The sugar trade forms the chief industry, and occupies the greater part of the inhabitants, but wealth and prosperity have gradually disappeared

since the abolition of slavery—a measure of doubtful benefit to the negroes themselves, and one of the causes of the ruin of the planters and of the West Indian trade. This island, in common with others, is sometimes devastated by tremendous hurricanes. The year of my sojourn there a very destructive storm swept right across the islands, but Barbados sustained little damage, only a few walls being blown down, and some of the crops injured. At Newcastle, in Jamaica, many of the soldiers' huts were destroyed by this hurricane, whilst St. Lucia and St. Vincent were completely devastated.

Slight earthquakes were of common occurrence, and in Jamaica I experienced some severe shocks lasting several seconds. It is related that an earthquake once took place there when the congregation was assembled in one of the parish churches. The parson hoped to rise to the occasion and allay the fears of his flock. "Calm yourselves, dear brethren," he exclaimed, "there could be no better place in which to die than this holy edifice." At this moment a more severe shock was experienced; the parson added, "But outside's good enough for me," and, gathering up his robes, fled to the door.

The climate of Barbados is not unpleasant, but it is very enervating, although during part of the year it is comparatively cool owing to the prevalence of the trades, those winds of God that bring relief from the heat, and formerly wafted our ships to victory.

In the way of shooting, the island offers but a poor field to the sportsman. It is, in fact, destitute of anything that would be called game in other parts of the world more favoured with animal life. The

only permanent feathered inhabitants considered worth shooting are the little ground-doves, birds about the size of quail, which afford a certain amount of sport of a very mild type. They inhabit the open ground all over the island, and may be knocked over with ease by a charge of No. 10 shot as they wing their short flight over the surface of the ground. These we used to shoot at times in considerable numbers; whilst as for larger game, when a brown pelican or a sea-gull appeared on the coast there was great excitement, and the guns mustered in force to hunt the unfortunate intruder. For the rest, I believe the different species of birds indigenous to the island might be counted on the fingers of one hand. I can only recollect a blackbird, a common sparrow, two species of humming-birds, and a large kind of grey shrike with a red crest on his head, but seldom met with. But in the autumnal months from August to October there used to appear large flocks of migratory birds more worthy of our powder and shot. These were of various species. There were plovers, golden and black breasted; curlews; dotterel; pikers, whose English name I forget; likewise different kinds of sandpipers, very similar to the snipets met with in the marshes of India, and locally in Barbados termed long-legs, nits, chirps, and ring-necks, according to their kind. Once I shot a black web-footed bird called a noddy, and on another memorable occasion an egret fell to my gun; but these were rare visitants to the island.

The shore birds used to arrive in thousands from the Spanish Main, and were said to be bound for the North-American lakes, on their way to which they

alighted in large numbers on the islands of the West Indies, before proceeding on their journey to the north. I believe we at Barbados only came in for the outside edge of the flight of feathered myriads, as we were not in the direct track. Nevertheless, countless thousands invaded the island during the whole of August and September. A reference to my diary shows that the first shore birds were shot in 1886 on the 17th July, and the last on the 15th October. I used to pick up numbers of the various species on the savannah, in the marshes near the shore, and on the white sand itself. Sometimes they afforded very pretty shooting, for a long-leg flying swiftly in a gale of wind does not offer an easy mark. On one occasion a flight of chirps swept by me, skimming over the placid surface of the sea, and two barrels into the middle of them brought down thirteen birds. The smaller sandpipers were easier to approach than the pikers, long-legs, and plovers, which were so wary that it required a careful stalk to get within shot of them. Some of the planters who possessed extensive swamps on their estates used to erect wooden huts in likely places, where the sportsmen would take up their position, accompanied by call-boys. These latter, with the aid of wooden whistles, would skilfully imitate the cries of various birds, and thus attract them within shot, and in this manner large numbers were slain.

Personally, I preferred to wander alone with my gun on the solitary shore; to listen to the ceaseless murmur of the waves lapping on the beach, and the rustling of the wind among the palms; to look out

across the emerald sea, and watch for the coming flight; or to shoot the birds as they rose from the sandy waste and circled in the air overhead. Although in this manner more than a dozen birds were seldom brought to bag in the course of a couple of hours' walk, it was a more pleasant method of shooting, and the sea-shore was more interesting than the dreary swamps of the interior; but at best the sport was poor, and would not have been worth indulging in had the resources of the island afforded a more exciting occupation. Sometimes we went sea-fishing by night, but met with little success. We were more successful in shooting fish from the pier with a Martini-Henry rifle. I used to stand with a companion at the end of the pier in an *al fresco* costume of bathing drawers, and wait until a shoal of mullet passed near the surface. A bullet into the middle of the fish stunned a number, and we would then dive in and capture the killed and wounded.

In April 1887 I received news of my transfer to the Indian Staff Corps, and on the 19th of that month embarked on board the *Moselle*, and, after touching at Cherbourg and Plymouth, arrived at Southampton on the 1st of May. Although I felt some regret at leaving my old regiment, a career in the East Indies appeared to offer more attraction, and I was glad of the opportunity of seeking adventures in a new land.

CHAPTER III

THE PUNJAB

Voyage of the *Rohilla*—Bangalore—Multan—Country and Climate—The City—Murder of two English Officers—Quail Shooting—Grey Cranes—The Chenab—On the March—Shershah—Crossing the River—Ships of the Desert—A Dreary Country—Dera din Pana—Leia—Suleiman Mountains—Duck-shooting—The Indus—Dera Ismail Khan—Sheik Budin—A Mirage—The Kurrum River—Wild-fowl at Narang Serai—Bunnoo—Frontier Robbers—Kohat—The Commander-in-Chief—The Kohat Pass—Peshawar—Climate—Fruit Gardens—The City—The Jhelum Salt Range—Sport on the Cabul River—Sport near Aimal Chabutra—Chamkanni—Extremes of Heat and Cold—Rawal Pindi—Murree—View from the Mountains—Fort Jamrud—A Dust Storm—The Khyber Pass—Colonel Warburton—Historic Ground—Ali Masjid—The Afridis—Landi Kotal—Frontier Warfare—Ferozepore—Native Method of shooting Antelope—Sport on the Sutlej River—Great Bag of Wild Geese—Crocodiles.

AFTER an interval of only one month at home, I embarked for Bombay on board the P. & O. steamer *Rohilla* on 2nd June 1887. This was not a pleasant time of year for the voyage, the heat in the Red Sea being very great, whilst there were few passengers, as only those who are obliged to do so would travel at this season. The captain of the ship was a fine sailor of the old school. He had earned several medals for saving life, and also wore the Egyptian War Medal and Khedive's Star, awarded him for his services in patrolling Alexandria during the disturbances in 1882. On arrival at Bombay I was posted to a

Madras regiment at Bangalore, but after a fortnight at that station was transferred to the Bengal Staff Corps, and sent to join a regiment at Multan.

This station is not a particularly attractive one, famous as it is for dust, beggars, and graveyards; and certainly all these made themselves most evident when I arrived there in the month of August. The heat was very oppressive, and I felt it all the more on coming from the cool, moist climate of Bangalore. In Multan it appeared as if rain had never fallen, and not a drop fell during the two and a half months of my existence there. The surrounding country was all white and glaring. During the daytime the ground and the sky emitted an almost intolerable heat, whilst the scorching night brought but little relief. The whole country was a waste of dust, supporting a considerable number of date palm-trees, and in some places stretches of elephant grass. At that season of the year there was but little occupation, for it was too hot for lawn-tennis and other games. Those who played polo were enveloped in a cloud of dust which rendered the riders scarcely visible to the spectators.

I visited the city, the walls of which still bore marks of bullets and cannon-balls. The fort was garrisoned by our troops, and another great fort was being built, and was almost completed, on the outskirts of the cantonment. The old fort contained a fine large mosque, the habitation of innumerable blue pigeons, here held sacred. The mosque is the scene of the slaughter of two English officers, who were treacherously slain after a desperate resistance,

in the year 1848. The town is uninteresting, consisting of the usual collection of dirty and squalid huts, and numerous mosques surrounded by a dilapidated wall; but there were some pleasant gardens in the vicinity.

At this time of the year there is not much sport to be obtained except with the quail, which appear in great numbers towards the end of August. Twice in the year great flights of these birds swarm in the fields, going southwards in August and September, and passing again in March and April on their return journey to the north. They come to the cotton-fields in vast numbers, and we had many a good morning's sport, frequently making a bag of thirty or forty brace in the course of a couple of hours' shooting. The native shikaris used to place call-birds in cages in the fields on the evening before we were going to shoot, and thus collect a large quantity of game in a small area. The sport, however, soon palls upon one, for the shooting is very easy, and we were glad to get a little variety when the teal began to arrive on the Chenab River, and to congregate in the marshes beyond it, which we visited several times. Once we put up seven bustard in a grain-field; they did not fly, but ran at such a pace that all our efforts to come up with them were in vain. By the time we marched from Multan at the beginning of November there were very few large duck in, for these arrive later than the teal. Sometimes we shot a few sand-grouse and pigeons, but there was not much variety of game. Towards the end of October large numbers of grey crane used to fly over the station, generally at

night, when their cries could he heard afar off, and sometimes they alighted in great flocks, and lined the banks of the Chenab River. In the daytime these birds fly very high up, so that it takes some time to discover their whereabouts from the sound they make; but at night they travel near the ground, and it is said that the natives then capture them by means of a stone tied to a piece of string, which they throw among the flocks to bring the birds down. These cranes are very wary and difficult to approach, and I frequently made unsuccessful stalks in attempting to bring them to bag. But they almost invariably rose just out of shot, as if they knew the range of a gun. I managed to shoot only one during my residence at Multan. He fell with a broken wing, and when I came up to him he turned fiercely to bay, and had to be knocked on the head with a stick. A few geese, both grey and barred-headed, were to be seen on the river late in October, but they did not begin to arrive in large numbers until much later, and few were seen before we reached the Indus in the middle of November.

The Chenab has a swift and muddy current, in which we attempted fishing several times, but without much success. We caught a few fish of various species and curious and grotesque appearance, but our basket generally contained only hawk-bill turtles.

On the whole, Multan is quite the dreariest station I have been quartered at, and we were not sorry to receive the route to march to Peshawar by way of Dera Ismail Khan and the Kohat Pass. We

did not expect very much sport on the way, as I had been informed by one who knew the country that there was neither fur nor feather on the far side of the river Indus. However, it is an interesting country, well worth seeing, although the stretches of stony desert and arid waste were by no means pleasing to the eye.

Early in November we left Multan, and the first day marched some seven miles to the bank of the Chenab. Here I knew where to find game, having been several times after wild-fowl to the river at Shershah, and to a certain chain of small ponds or *jheels* on the farther bank of the stream. This was a sure find for teal; so in the evening two of us crossed the river in a boat, visited the ponds and marshes, and shot four couple of teal and a big mallard. Next day we made the passage of the Chenab—an easy enough matter as far as our men and ourselves were concerned, but a most difficult undertaking for the baggage and transport animals. The Chenab is now spanned at Shershah by a fine bridge, but at the time of which I write the passage had to be made in boats. The baggage of the regiment was carried entirely on camels,—in all, I think, about two hundred,—and never shall I forget the trouble we had in getting these beasts into the boats. Although generally docile animals on land, the "ships of the desert" most decidedly objected to a voyage by water, and each camel had to be hauled and pushed into the boat. At length we all got across, and, having disembarked and reloaded our baggage, marched on to the next camping-ground, arriving

there late in the evening. The following three days we marched through a dreary country—an endless expanse of low sandhills, with scattered, stunted bushes. There seemed to be scarcely any game in these arid regions, but a few partridges were occasionally heard calling in the early morning, and at times a flight of sand-grouse would pass overhead. At Dera Din Pana I halted for a day's shooting, whilst the regiment went on to Sultankot. It was but poor sport: very little game was about, only the francolin or black partridge and the grey partridges (more like the English bird), and we succeeded in bagging only a few brace of these.

On the march we left our camping-ground daily long before daybreak, and arrived at our next halting-place in time for breakfast. One day we halted at Leia, a clean and well-kept city of considerable size, with paved streets and a large gateway at each end of the main road. Near this place was a large lake, where we hoped to obtain some shooting, but not a bird was to be seen on it. From the people at Leia we heard that there was a good place for duck at the next stage; so two of us went on, travelling by the slowest train I have ever been in. Its slow progression was doubtless due to the sand, which shifts with every wind, and at times entirely covers the line. Here we were in the vicinity of the Waziri country, and the dreary expanse was relieved by the lofty heights of the Suleiman Range, among which stood the great Takht-i-Suleiman. At daybreak we were up and went off on baggage camels to some *jheels* six

miles from Karur, the place where we were encamped. The camel-riding was the most uncomfortable and tedious mode of progression I have ever tried, for the camels were baggage animals untrained for riding; but the sport obtained at the end of our journey made up for the discomfort of it. First we came to a small pond, thickly overgrown with rushes, from which a crowd of wild-fowl rose. Many fell to our guns; but the birds came circling back again and again, and we soon made a fair bag here, although the shooting was not good, and many duck were lost in the reeds. We then moved on to a large lake, plentifully sprinkled with duck and teal. Hard by was another piece of water; so, by judicious tactics, we were enabled to blaze at the ducks as they flew backwards and forwards from one lake to the other. I fear we did not shoot very well, for when we rejoined the regiment at the end of the day our bag consisted of only twenty-eight duck of various kinds.

Next day we entered the valley of the Indus, where the green fields and more plentiful trees were very welcome to our sight. Here we were again in luck, for we bagged five duck and a couple of grey geese within a mile of camp.

The following day found me twenty-five miles off on the bank of the Indus at Majoca, where I spent the best part of two days in trying to circumvent the cranes, geese, and duck, which were to be seen in vast quantities. But they were all very wild, and I obtained few shots, and bagged nothing. One should have a large gun for this kind of shooting, and my only weapon was a twelve-bore.

In the cold, grey dawn of the 14th November we issued from our camp, crossed the Indus and four of its branches by pontoon bridges, and, after a hot and dusty march, entered Dera Ismail Khan, preceded by the pipers of a regiment of the Punjab Frontier Force quartered at that station.

This place, commonly called "Dismal Khan," is much abused, but to us it seemed a pleasant spot, like an oasis in the desert, for all beyond is a howling wilderness.

Two desert marches brought us to Pézu, at the foot of the mountain of Sheik Budin, on whose summit is a sanatorium; and a bleak and lonely health resort it must be. The markhor, a species of wild goat, inhabits this hill, but two of our party who went out in search of sport did not succeed in shooting any. After passing through a rocky defile we emerged next day upon a broad and fertile plain. Large numbers of sand-grouse flew over the column on the line of march, but we could never find any of these birds after our arrival in camp. Once we saw in the distance what appeared to be a great lake glittering in the rays of the morning sun, but our hopes of wild-fowl in prospect were dissipated by the discovery that it was merely a mirage that had deceived our eyes.

After crossing the Kurrum River by a ford we encamped near the stream at Narang Serai, and in the afternoon went to look for game in a marsh where there were a few duck and teal. When the regiment marched next day, I and another officer remained behind to shoot on the Kurrum River.

Starting at daybreak we shot all day, but with

poor success, for only one goose and about a dozen duck and teal fell to our guns. Never have I seen such countless millions of wild-fowl as there were on this river. They rose in myriads and darkened the air, whilst the whirr of their wings might have been heard at a great distance. They were very wild. At the risk of our lives we crossed the treacherous quicksands of the river again and again in pursuit of the game. Many that were shot fell into the swift current, and were borne rapidly away, whilst others were carried off by large hawks which attended us all day.

From Narang Serai a fourteen-mile ride brought us to Bunnoo, or Edwardesabad, whence the regiment marched to Bahadur Khel.

From this place we marched for several days through rocky defiles and barren mountains, one day traversing a long tunnel through a hill, until we arrived at Kohat, the last frontier station on our line of march. No more game was met with during this time, and the monotony of marching and camp-life was unrelieved.

At night the regiment was surrounded by a cordon of sentries, a precaution rendered necessary by the presence of bands of robbers who were said to be in the district. So cunning and skilful are these frontier robbers that they will steal rifles from tents full of sleeping soldiers.

At Kohat, a pleasant little station, we halted three days to take part in some field manœuvres in the presence of the Commander-in-Chief. My regiment was one of those which had accompanied him on the celebrated march from Cabul to Kandahar, and the men especially looked forward to again

seeing their old chief. All the troops in garrison lined the roads to receive him, and an amusing incident occurred. When the chief was momentarily expected, a carriage, preceded and followed by a cavalry escort, drove rapidly down the road; the first regiment, thinking that his Excellency had arrived, presented arms. The salute was carried on all down the line, but as the carriage passed us we saw that it was occupied by Lady Roberts. The Commander-in-Chief himself rode in soon afterwards. On leaving Kohat, we marched through the pass over the mountains by a zig-zag and rugged path. This valley was dotted with small strongholds. Every man's house was literally his castle, a necessity among such a turbulent people. The inhabitants were even then indulging in their favourite pastime of fighting; at least many shots resounded through the valley, and tribal warfare was said to be the cause of them.

There were some chikor or hill-partridges here, but we were unable to leave the road to go after them. We were glad to reach Peshawar on the 3rd December, and to settle down again after the discomforts of a thirty-two days' march. The cantonment had at this time a very bad reputation on account of its unhealthiness, but I believe this has passed away since the introduction of a new water supply, and the place is now as salubrious as most Punjab stations.

It was bitterly cold, and there was frost on the ground when we marched into Peshawar at the beginning of December. Passing through miles of peach and other fruit gardens, we entered the can-

tonment at its southern extremity, and pleasant indeed it looked after our long desert march, for the trees at the sides of the roads were green, and the gardens were enclosed by hedges of roses in full bloom.

The city of Peshawar is a place of great interest. Entering by the Edwardes gate, one passes through a street of shops of various kinds, where swords and shields and table-cloths in endless variety are sold. Farther on we come to a number of skin shops, where furs from all parts of Asia, from Kashmir and Thibet, from Bokhara and Siberia, are exposed for sale. Here are rugs of silver-fox skins, there the beautiful pelts of the ounce or snow-leopard, lying side by side with sable and squirrel and cat skins from Bokhara. *Poshteens*, sheep-skin coats manufactured in Cabul, hang in front of the shops, and rugs of camel and sheep skin are piled in profusion.

The men seen in the streets are generally of forbidding appearance, and do not appear to look with favour on the European. The women go about in long white garments, with eyeholes to look through, but otherwise veiled from head to foot.

The year passed at Peshawar is, on the whole, a pleasant memory to me. I was fortunate enough to escape the two worst months of the hot weather by going to Murree, a lovely hill-station in the Himalayas.

My stay there was also varied by a trip to the Jhelum Salt Range in search of *oorial*, the wild sheep of the Punjab, and by many a good day's shooting on the Cabul River. In the Jhelum Salt

Range, where I spent ten days with a brother officer, we did not obtain much sport. There are very few *oorial* remaining there, and not many of them bear good enough heads to be worth shooting. Our bag consisted of only a couple of these animals and a few head of small game.

We used sometimes to go down the Cabul River in a boat during the cold weather, starting from a pontoon bridge, and making our way some ten miles down the stream to Nisatha.

Frequently we had very good sport with the duck and teal, and sometimes added a goose or crane to the bag. I had only one good day after snipe, when two of us shot twenty-six couple of birds on Mathra Jheel, near the hills north of the Khyber. On another occasion we drove out to Matanni, near Aimal Chabutra, at the mouth of the Kohat Pass, and crossed the frontier in search of si-si partridges, but did not get many. We were accompanied by a horde of frontier rascals armed with *jezails*, who insisted on attaching themselves to us, saying they had come to protect us. The best shooting-ground near cantonments was a little-known place, Chamkanni, beyond the fort, to which I resorted several times, and bagged numbers of duck and sand-grouse.

The hot weather at Peshawar was certainly terrible. All day one had to be shut up in the bungalow, emerging only at sunset, whilst at night the heat was so great as to render sleep almost impossible.

This state of things, happily, lasts only about six months, and the cold weather, when the climate is perfect, makes up for it. It is sometimes so cold in

December and January as to render it necessary to keep fires burning all day.

I passed August and September at Murree, forty miles from the large military station of Rawal Pindi. Here, 7000 feet above sea-level, the scorched-up traveller from the plains finds rest, and is able to breathe the fresh air once more. It was indeed a pleasant change, and one that I could appreciate after having suffered much from fever during some months' residence in the burning plains below. There was no sport to be obtained at Murree during the rainy season, which lasts from June to September, although I heard there were some panthers and bears in the vicinity; so I had little to do but idle away the time in pleasant rides and walks on the hill-sides.

The view from the Murree hills was grand on clear days, and the scenery was sublime. There were deep valleys clothed with deodars, and beyond were hills, and mountains in the middle distance, and again mountains towards Kashmir as far as the eye could reach. There were grand, gloomy forests, the abode of awful solitudes, and deep, dark ravines where the sun never reached the abysmal depths; and beyond all, glistening in the light of heaven, jutted great peaks, their bases veiled in the purple distance, their summits clad in eternal snow. And to the south, far far away, shimmering in a pall of heat, lay the arid plains of the Punjab.

On returning to Peshawar I found myself detailed to command Fort Jamrud during the month of October. From the outskirts of the cantonments two broad metalled roads, constructed to facilitate the movement of troops in time of war, run side by

side due west towards the Khyber Pass. Approaching Fort Jamrud these two roads converge into one broad way, which becomes rugged and stony as it nears the celebrated pass. Farther on, the road enters the gloom of the mountains, and winds along their rugged sides. This is the high road to Cabul. On two days in the week a stream of traffic, of camels and two-wheeled carts, passes along this road to the caravanserai at Jamrud. On other than these caravan days the country is almost deserted.

Fort Jamrud was built by the Sikhs, but it has been partly reconstructed and improved upon since it came into our hands. Near here the Sikhs fought many a battle with the fierce tribes, who came down from the hills above, and in the vicinity is the last resting-place of their great general, Hari Singh, who fell in battle.

The fort is situated about ten miles from Peshawar, and a mile from the entrance to the Khyber Pass. At the time I write of, it was garrisoned by one hundred infantry and fifty native cavalry, under the command of a British officer. Whilst at Jamrud I made the acquaintance of Colonel Mahomed Aslam Khan, who commanded the Khyber Rifles, and also of Afridi Khan, the headman of one of the local tribes, who used to send me most welcome presents of ice. One day I rode to Ali Masjid with Colonel Warburton, the political officer of the Khyber, to whom is doubtless in great measure due the long period of peace that obtained in the Khyber country.

Whilst I was returning from Peshawar to Jamrud one evening a great dust-storm arose, such as frequently prevails in Northern India. These dust-

storms are welcome, as they clear the atmosphere, reducing the temperature ten or fifteen degrees in the course of a few minutes. They are, in other respects, rather a nuisance, as the dust gets into one's bungalow, and everything is soon covered with a thick layer. On this occasion I was galloping down the road towards Jamrud, when the sun, which had lately been shining brightly, retired behind the clouds, the sky assumed a leaden hue, and the atmosphere an oppressive closeness, such as generally precedes a thunderstorm or an earthquake. Soon the lightning flashed among the Khyber hills, and the thunder reverberated among their rocky caverns, awakening echoes that had a few years previously been roused by the roar of cannon and the rattle of musketry. A few drops of rain fell pattering on the parched surface of the earth; the wind rose and blew in gusts, moaning among the scanty trees, and whistling round the grey walls of Hari Singh ka Burg. Then a dark cloud, borne on the wings of the wind, appeared in the far north. Rapidly it approached, and the voice of the storm came howling through the desert air. The cloud was of dust, and, like the blast of the simoom, seemed to overwhelm everything in its course. The air was darkened, and my horse galloped on with difficulty through the blinding storm. At length the dust-storm passed, and like a huge pillar of cloud rolled on to the south, whilst the red glare of the setting sun fired the particles of dust, transforming the cloud to a pillar of fire as it rolled onward across the desert.

Where it had passed, all things were as before;

the air was cleared by the passage of the storm, and a gentle breeze was wafted from the western hills. Soon I rode through the gateway of Fort Jamrud, a mass of buildings standing out on the stony waste.

The following extract from an article of mine, published in *Land and Water* in May 1891, may be of interest in the light of subsequent events :—

"I left the fort early one morning with a small escort of cavalry, and rode towards the famous pass. The vast importance and historical interest of this, one of the principal gates of India, render the first aspect of the Khyber Pass most interesting and impressive to the traveller. It is celebrated in both ancient and modern history. By this way Alexander of Macedon advanced to the conquest of Hindustan. From here issued the barbarian hordes of Timur the Tartar, when that conqueror overran India and established his Eastern empire. Every point of this mountain defile has been fought for; every rock has borne the brunt of battle; the tide of war has flowed through it from Afghanistan to India, and from India back to those bloodstained plains. Inhabited by wild and warlike tribes, the rocky sides of the Khyber Pass have ever afforded safe strongholds to their fierce warriors, and on more than one occasion they have been a serious obstacle to our advance into Afghanistan. Now, however, times are changed. Since the last Afghan war the work of pacification of the Khyber tribes has steadily progressed, until, at the present day, the road through these rugged hills is comparatively safe both for travellers and traffic. The

road is in excellent order. At times it passes through rocky defiles, or is bridged over watercourses, and anon winds round some tall cliff, whose cloud-wrapt summit towers above the vale below.

"The scenery is much the same all the way. Hill rises upon hill, and rock upon rock, and the majestic mountains trend away until they become purple in the far west.

"Some ten miles up the pass we arrive at the fort of Ali Masjid, a high, almost inaccessible cliff, crowned by a grey grim fort. A silver brook runs over a stony bed at the base of the hills, a pure limpid stream, rippling in the sunlight, which but a few years since ran red with the blood of British soldiers. Here, in the last Afghan war, took place that stubborn fight, when, time after time, our troops were beaten back by the fierce mountaineers. Nor was it until their rear was threatened by one of our columns that the Afghans retired from their impregnable position, and we took possession of our dearly-bought prize—the fort of Ali Masjid.

"Stones mark the place where heroes fell, and the bones of enemies and friends alike lie moulder-ing under the lonely sand. The fort is now garrisoned by a detachment of the Khyber Rifles, a force raised in our service from among the tribes of the pass. This levy is of great utility. It garrisons the pass, and escorts caravans on the way to and from Cabul. In its ranks are many who fought against us at Ali Masjid, but they are now faithful servants of the British crown.

"The various tribes inhabiting the pass are wild and warlike, inured to guerilla warfare, and regard-

less of life. The men are fair, and of fine aspect, and many of them of a Semitic cast of features. By the distribution of subsidies, and by the raising of a levy from their own people, the wild tribesmen have become more or less subservient to British rule, and the bloodshed and lawlessness of former days have given way to a condition of comparative peace and quiet. Nevertheless, the Afridis are not to be trusted. They are jealous of their freedom, and ready to resent any encroachment on their rights. They are subservient only to the force of arms and the power of gold. The wolf sleeps, but is not dead; the fire of hatred has burnt low, but is not extinguished.

"At the farther end of the pass is Landi Kotal, where a large caravanserai has lately been built, and at which, it has been rumoured, the establishment of a cantonment is contemplated. Such an advance would be fraught with importance, as it would finally secure the shortest route to Cabul; and, in the event of our having again to enter Afghanistan by force of arms, it would open out one of the principal roads, which has in former years caused no little opposition to the advance of our armies."

This was written nearly ten years ago, and history has since proved that the wolf indeed only slumbered, and has arisen like a giant refreshed. And if carpet-bag party politicians, fireside strategists, and dilettante-tacticians could see this mountainous frontier country, and appreciate the difficulties of a military expedition against its warlike inhabitants, there would be less talk of incompetence and failure in the conduct of the late campaign in Tirah.

Towards the end of 1888 I was transferred to a regiment stationed at Ferozepore, where I spent a few months before proceeding on leave to Kashmir. The approach to Ferozepore does not present that place in a very inviting aspect. Crossing the great bridge over the Sutlej at Ganda Singh, one sees a great dome of reddish dust hiding a considerable portion of the flat desert country. This cloud of dust contains the station of Ferozepore.

Arriving there in December, I saw the cantonment at its best, the nights being very cold, and the days sufficiently cool to render a fire necessary. The climate there was pleasant and healthy, and the sport obtainable on the Sutlej River was excellent. On the river we had many a good day's shooting, crocodiles, geese, duck, and teal forming the usual bag; and occasionally we shot some hares, partridges, and sand-grouse in the jungle west of the cantonment. One day I went to a place in the small independent state of Faridkot, to try and shoot some antelope, but met with no success. The son of the rajah was shooting on the same day, and I had an opportunity of observing the method employed by him. He had a long line of flags placed at intervals of about a yard from each other, with an open space of some ten yards left in the middle of the line. A troop of mounted men then drove the surrounding country for antelope, which, on being hunted towards the line of flags, made for the open space, and were shot by the sportsmen, who were concealed close by, as they galloped past.

At the beginning of the cold weather numbers

of wild-fowl came down to the plains of India from the far north. Quantities remain on the five great rivers of the Punjab and their tributaries, whilst others speed on to the south, settling on all the rivers and lakes from end to end of the peninsula. Flights of grey crane line the river banks; flocks of geese, both grey and barred-headed, come down to the water, and feed in the surrounding grain-fields; whilst countless myriads of duck and teal of almost every variety throng in their thousands wherever there is water. In February and March all these birds fly north again over the Himalayan barrier and across the Hindu Khush. Whither they go I know not, but probably their summer home is in the deserts of Siberia and the plains of Afghanistan and Persia.

In order to give some idea of the kind of sport obtainable on the Punjab rivers, I cannot do better than describe a day's shooting on the Sutlej River near Ferozepore. In the middle of February 1889, accompanied by two friends, I drove across country in an *ecca*, or native two-wheeled pony-cart, to a place of boats on the Sutlej River, about twelve miles above the great bridge at Ganda Singh. Here we embarked in a large cargo-boat of curious manufacture, shaped like a mud-flat, with a high wooden screen at the prow, rendering it an excellent vessel for wild-fowl shooting. A gentle breeze stirred the surface of the Sutlej, a mighty stream rolling between high banks and through stretches of sand.

On either side lay level plains, unrelieved by any hill or other eminence, sandy and drear, a howling wilderness, broken here and there by a patch of

cultivation or a stretch of tall elephant grass. We floated slowly down the river for some little time without seeing any living thing save the bright blue and red kingfishers which flashed from bank to bank, and the black and white ones which hovered motionless over the stream, and then, having dropped like a stone into the water, rose again bearing a silvery prize. Soon we saw many duck flying to and fro, and before long a large flock of birds was sighted, settled on a spit of land jutting out into the river, some five hundred yards ahead. On a nearer approach being made, we discovered that these birds were barred-headed geese. On, on we floated silently down with the current, whilst the geese, all unconscious of their impending danger, sunned themselves on the sand, some sleeping peacefully with their heads under their wings, and others pluming their long feathers. At length we arrived within twenty yards of the birds, now beginning to wake up and look suspiciously in our direction, cackling the while with outstretched necks. Then we rose as one man, and two deadly volleys were poured in among the luckless geese. When the smoke cleared and the feathers settled down, we went to pick up the dead and dying, amounting to eleven birds, some of which still paddled feebly. The wild goose is generally a very wary bird, and I have never since succeeded in getting up to a flock of them; but this lot must have been particularly foolish, for they allowed us to get within shot again, and six more were added to our bag. All this time large flocks of duck and teal were flying about, but they warily kept at a distance from our boat,

and few came within shot; however, we managed to bring down some stray ones during the next half-hour. We now turned our attention to a large crocodile which was basking in the sun about a hundred and fifty yards off. He was lying on the bank with his head towards the river, his long pointed snout only a few feet from the water; so that, unless killed on the spot, there would be little chance of recovering his body. I rested my rifle on the gunwale of the boat, and, when within a hundred yards of the monster, planted an express bullet between his neck and shoulder. The struggles of that saurian were tremendous. He made a great leap on receiving the shot, and then his tail began to work like a flail, whilst the blood streamed from his gaping jaws. However, he could not move from his place, and stopped kicking in a few moments; we dragged the twelve-foot carcase into the boat, and went on down the river. Two more crocodiles were slain in this manner; but we lost some wounded ones, so gave up shooting at them. Unless hit in a vital spot and killed at once, these creatures will always drag themselves into the water and sink. The Sutlej crocodiles are not the blunt-nosed man-eaters, but have long narrow jaws, like an elongated beak, and subsist principally on fish. Their jaws, however, are furnished with very ugly-looking and formidable rows of sharp teeth, and a wounded one will snap viciously at his captor.

The duck on these Punjab rivers are difficult to approach, and a large bag is seldom made with a twelve-bore gun. In the ponds and marshes near the rivers they are easier to circumvent, and I have

made many a good bag in such places, and thinned out many a flock of common and blue-winged teal.

On this occasion we saw many more duck and teal, but shot few, and towards evening we arrived at Ganda Singh, unloaded the boat, and counted the game. The total bag amounted to three crocodiles, seventeen geese, and a number of duck and teal, besides a few birds of nondescript character. No doubt more could be done with large-bore guns, but there is more sport in shooting with a twelve-bore, and I would rather bring down a single mallard, flying swiftly down the wind, with such a gun, than shoot half a dozen with a four-bore.

In April I obtained four months' leave to Kashmir, so left Ferozepore and travelled to that promised land by way of Rawal Pindi and Murree.

CHAPTER IV

KASHMIR

Journey to Kashmir—Road to Kohala—The Jhelum River—The Happy Valley—The Wular Lake—March up the Mountains—Camp in the Snow—An Avalanche—Moonlight March—Valley of the Kishengunga—Gurais—Ibex—View from a Mountain Pass—Prom Tilail—The Satai Nullah—Bear shot in the Zadgai—Red Bears—Sheep-killing Bear—Bear missed—Keen Scent of Bears—Two Bears seen—Another Bear—Ibex chased by Ounce—Mist on the Mountains—A Mountain Tarn—A Cunning Musk-deer—Four Bears seen—In the Clouds—Snow-leopards.

On the 12th April 1889 I left the dreary plains of the Punjab behind me, and, accompanied by a friend, drove in a *tonga*, or cart drawn by a pair of ponies, from sunrise to sunset, along the Kashmir road. A drive of forty miles brought us to the pretty little hill-station of Murree, where I had passed my two months' leave during the hot weather of the previous year. Without halting at Murree, we drove on to Kohala, a village on the boundary between British territory and that of the Maharajah of Kashmir. As far as Kohala the road wound along the sides of the hills, below which lay fertile valleys, and at times unfathomable gorges, whose black depths were almost concealed by the thick foliage. Early the following morning we proceeded on our journey, crossing a bridge over the river, where the Jhelum, pent up in a narrow gorge, rushes foaming over broken rocks between high banks.

I believe one can now drive all the way from Rawal Pindi to Srinagar, but in those days Garhi was the limit to which wheeled traffic could go, and from there we had to complete our journey on foot. We had to hurry on as fast as possible, as we desired to secure a good shooting-ground. It was therefore necessary to keep ahead of other sportsmen, for, according to the etiquette of Kashmir shooting, the man who first arrives on the ground and pitches his camp in a valley, acquires the exclusive right of shooting over the country in the vicinity. Beyond Garhi there are five stages, a distance of sixty-five miles, to Baramulla, but we accomplished the journey in two long marches and one short one. To within five miles of Chakoti our way lay along a broad, tortuous road which was in course of construction in the valley of the Jhelum. The road was in some places tunnelled through the solid rock; in others bridged over deep ravines; and at times, when winding along the mountain-side, was rugged and uneven. We had some difficulty in getting our baggage along, although we had taken very little with us. What we had was loaded on an *ecca*, or two-wheeled pony-cart, and on one occasion we had to take our cart to pieces, carry it over a ravine, and put it together again on the other side. The first day we rested at the *dâk-bungalow* at Chakoti, and the next at Uri, thirty-one miles farther. Some of the travellers' bungalows were very comfortable and well-furnished, but others were dreadful hovels, and at most of them we experienced considerable difficulty in obtaining anything fit to eat.

From the low hills above Baramulla we obtained our first view of the Happy Valley, embosomed below in the midst of the Himalayas. Beneath stretched broad green meadows, through which the river Jhelum, famed as the Hydaspes in ancient days, wound its course between low banks lined with trees; and beyond lay the dark waters of the Wular lake, backed by the snowy mountains that towered above.

Wishing to reach our shooting-ground as soon as possible, we did not proceed to Srinagar, but engaged shikaris at Baramulla, and, having hired tents and such scanty furniture as we required, hastened on towards the snow-covered mountains.

One has to be very careful in engaging shikaris, for the majority of them are great rascals, whose sole object is to get as much as possible out of their employers. I was fortunate in securing the services of a good, honest fellow, who proved himself an excellent man in every way.

After eighteen hours' journey by boat up the Jhelum and across the Wular lake, we disembarked at Bandipura, and marched thence to Kralpura, where we pitched our camp at the foot of the hills. At this time of the year the climate of Kashmir is delightful, and, after the heat of the Punjab plains, the country did indeed seem to merit its title of an earthly paradise.

Having with some difficulty collected coolies and supplies of grass shoes, rice, and other necessaries not obtainable in the wilds for which we were bound, we marched next morning to Tragbal, a steep climb to the top of the mountains, where we pitched our tents

in a clearing in the snow. Here it was bitterly cold at night. The icy wind rustled in the pine-trees, and whistled through the openings in my tent, and once I was awakened by the roar of an avalanche that thundered down the mountain-side not far off. These avalanches are sometimes the cause of serious loss of life, and a young army surgeon, whom I knew at Multan, perished with all his camp the previous year, being overwhelmed in the Sind valley.

Some hours before daybreak we marched by moonlight, in order that we might be able to walk over the snow without difficulty before its frozen surface should be melted by the heat of the sun. Crossing the Rajdiangan Pass we descended to the valley of the Kishengunga, and encamped at Kanzelwan, sixteen miles from our last halting-place. From here to Gurais was only eight miles; so we marched next day through that village to Zarwan, five miles farther on, at the foot of the pass leading into the Tilail district.

Between Kanzelwan and Gurais the stream of the Kishengunga flows through green pastures amid high mountains, forming here and there a reedy marsh, or a deep dark pool beneath spreading trees. Farther on, the torrent rushes over fallen rocks, under depths of snow and through dark ravines. The Gurais valley is broad and fertile, and contains several prosperous-looking villages. The inhabitants own large flocks of sheep and goats, and possess a great many strong but small ponies. These ponies make very good baggage animals, and are far preferable to the coolies, who can carry only comparatively small loads. At this early season of the year the

snow lay thick on the ground over the passes, so we were unable to make use of any but coolie-transport. Just above the principal village of Gurais stands a lofty, almost perpendicular cliff, where my shikâri pointed out a herd of ibex, and said there were a few fine ones still remaining, The herd was distinguishable through the binoculars, but I decided not to wait for them, but to push on to Tilail.

On 22nd April I crossed the path to the south-east and descended into Tilail, marching sixteen miles, whilst my companion remained at Zarwan to shoot in the surrounding nullahs. On the summit of the high pass between Gurais and Tilail I rested on a snow-covered plateau, where the silver birch-trees spread their wintry branches to the blast. From this high eminence a splendid view was obtained. Beneath lay a deep ravine with precipitous sides, clothed with dark pine-trees, tier upon tier laden with snow. To the north the sun shone on the eternal snows of Nunga Purbat, and shed his rays upon the glaciers of Dyamur. Far far away, bounding the range of vision, the colossal heights of the Roof of the World loomed through the misty atmosphere, forming a majestic and awe-inspiring scene. The rocky valleys, the ranges of rugged mountains with their mighty peaks, like dazzling emblems of eternity, looked down unchanged through all time on the vale below.

That day I encamped opposite the village of Prom Tilail, at the entrance to the Satai nullah, thus securing the exclusive right of shooting there as long as I remained in the valley. Leaving camp before dawn next morning, I started out in search of my



A HERD OF IBEX.

first bear, taking with me a double-barrelled express rifle and a Winchester repeating rifle. Crossing into the neighbouring Zadgai nullah, my shikari pointed out the tracks of two bears, which we followed for some distance until the path of one could be seen to cross the heights to our left, whilst the other animal had evidently entered the forest on the right. Suddenly there was a rustling in the brushwood, and there appeared a huge dark object scrambling through the snow, discerned now and then between the stems of the pine-trees. The bear had scented us, and was making a bolt of it. I fired several snap-shots in vain as glimpses of the animal were obtained through the intervals between the trees, and splinters of wood flew all round him. At length the bear emerged from the forest, and ran up a snow-drift in the open about two hundred and fifty yards off, where, by a lucky shot, I hit him far back. He stumbled but ran on, and was soon lost to view behind a barrier of snow.

We had a desperate climb up hill and through the snow, and it was some time before we found the bear's tracks and quantities of blood. He was evidently hard hit, for blood lay about in great gouts. We followed these tracks, and, about two hours after the animal had been first viewed, came suddenly upon him lying down, apparently asleep, a couple of yards off under a pine-tree. I fired into the mass of fur, and the bear half-raised himself on to his hind legs, and tried to get at me, but the second bullet sent him rolling over and over down hill for about three hundred feet, when he picked himself up and stood under a tree. Then, having no

cartridges left for the express rifle, I had to follow the poor beast up and finish him off with the Winchester. This was an immense bear, over seven feet long and very fat, his gigantic size no doubt accounting for the large amount of lead he took, as generally not much difficulty is experienced in killing these bears. He was the largest of his species I have seen, and they appear to seldom attain a much greater length than six feet. The coat was a splendid one, the hair very long and thick, of a silver-grey colour above and a reddish-brown underneath.

From October to May these red or snow bears (*Ursus isabellinus*) have beautiful coats, but the hair falls out during the hot weather, and my shikari informed me that the animal was not worth shooting between July and September.

A few days after the above-recorded adventure a bear killed a sheep not far from my camp, but, by the time of my arrival on the scene, Bruin had made off and left the remains of his prey to the vultures and other scavengers. When a bear takes to killing sheep, which is happily not often, he does an immense amount of damage. This particular bear had been a scourge to the surrounding villages for years, but he was so cunning that, although several sportsmen had been after him, no one had succeeded in getting a shot. His plan was to visit the sheepfold in the dead of night, and then kill all he could lay claws upon. Sometimes he would carry a few off, and they were occasionally found buried in the snow or ground in the vicinity, but his visit was usually only marked by the discovery in the morning of a heap of dead and dying sheep, killed apparently out

of sheer wantonness. This beast's depredations continued at intervals during the whole period of my stay in the Tilail district. One night he killed and wounded ten sheep, and carried off two of them; but he would never remain long in one place, and it was in vain that I searched the hill-sides for him..

As a rule the snow-bear feeds on roots, berries, and insects, which latter he finds under the stones on the hill-sides, but he is also said to have carnivorous propensities, and to be not averse to feeding on the carcases of any animals he may find, such as ibex that may have been overwhelmed by avalanches.

After killing my first bear I had a run of bad luck, partly owing to unfavourable weather, for it snowed or rained almost continually, and, although I toiled over the mountains day after day, and spent hours in the snow, nothing was seen for a fortnight except two ibex, which were not worth shooting by reason of their small size.

At the end of a fortnight my camp was moved five miles up the Satai nullah, and pitched amid a thicket of white birch-trees close to the stream, and beneath the shadow of a high precipice. Soon after my arrival in camp, a man who had been sent out to look for game brought in news of a bear he had seen about a mile off. After a stiff climb we viewed the bear at the bottom of a ravine, where he was lying down in the shadow of some bushes about two hundred yards off. Owing to the shingly sides of the ravine, we could get no nearer, so, resting my rifle on a rock, I took a steady aim on a patch of white fur on the animal's shoulder and fired. But, alas! the bullet passed over him and plunged into

the snow beyond, whilst the bear disappeared behind some rocks, followed by another unsuccessful shot. A short time afterwards we saw Bruin going off over the snow at a heavy gallop, and it was useless to pursue him, as there was no saying how far he might travel. Another week passed in a vain search for bears, but none were seen until 12th May, when we found one feeding on the southern slope of a low hill about five hundred yards off. On either side of us rose an inaccessible precipice, leaving only one line of approach. The wind was unfavourable, as it was blowing right up the ravine, so there was little chance of a successful stalk. We moved cautiously on for about fifty yards, hoping to find a way of climbing the cliffs on one side, and so get above the bear; but it was of no avail. The beast ceased grubbing in the grass, looked around, nose in air, and in a moment was off up the rocks and into the pathless forest. These bears are easily approached, if stalked against the wind, for their eyes are very small, and they cannot see far; but they have a wonderfully keen scent. One puff of wind from the stalker's direction, when at a distance of four or five hundred yards from the game, is sufficient to spoil all chance of getting a shot.

A few days later I went to look for this bear again, and was caught in a heavy snowstorm, so had to take shelter under some rocks until it cleared. At about two o'clock in the afternoon two bears came over a hill on the opposite side of the ravine, and scrambled down a snow-drift, playing like a couple of great dogs.

They were a very long way off, and I watched

their gambols for some time with the aid of my binoculars, hoping that they might come nearer, but was doomed to disappointment. After scampering about, rolling and playing in the snow for half an hour, they entered the depths of the forest, and we never saw them again.

Next day we visited the same place, and tracked the two bears for a long way over the mountains. Towards afternoon it came on to snow, and I gave up the chase in despair, so the shikari lighted a fire under a big pine-tree, where we sat down to warm ourselves and dry our wet clothes. After a time the sky cleared, and we walked along the crest of a long mountain, following the spoor of a snow-leopard for some distance, and then descended to the valley beneath. Looking up from below in the direction we had come from, I saw a fine bear rooting up the grass about six hundred yards off. On the way down we must have passed close by him, hidden from view by some rocks. Now, however, it was hopeless, for the wind was blowing up hill. Almost as soon as we saw him he took alarm and sat up on his haunches, looking in our direction. Then turning round he trotted off, and soon disappeared over the crest of the hill.

On 17th May I saw a great deal of game, but was singularly unlucky. Starting in the early morning we came on the tracks of a herd of ibex, which had apparently been chased into the valley by an ounce, and had crossed the river by a snow-bridge during the night. The shikari, with skilful deciphering of the tracks, said there were thirteen animals in the herd, but we never

saw them. Ibex will travel for miles when thus pursued.

We then climbed up the mountain-side, and ascended to the highest peak. The mountains were clad in a veil of mist; the clouds rolled through the dark woods, hung round the beetling crags, and floated in white fleecy fragments in the vale below. At length the mist cleared, and the sun rose and melted the light clouds, which disappeared in the infinite azure. A placid tarn was disclosed embosomed in the plateau beneath, surrounded by streaks of snow through which the young grass sprouted. On the brink three hornless stags were cropping the grass, but I did not disturb them, in spite of the entreaties of my shikari, who begged me to shoot one for food. In the afternoon we descended some distance, and had a long chase after a large, light-coloured musk-deer; but it was knowing and wary, and I could not get a shot. My shikari informed me that this deer was a solitary male that had frequented the same spot for years, and that two seasons before a sportsman had fired seven shots at it without effect, so it was not surprising that the animal would not allow me to get within shot.

Towards evening we sighted a very large bear. He came down the snow a long way off in the hills, and commenced feeding on the side of a small nullah. We started to stalk him, but with little hope of success, for the way was long and difficult, several ravines lay in our path, and it was beginning to get dusk. Whilst toiling up hill I happened to glance to my right, and looked towards the ground over which we had been wandering during the day. And

then forth from behind some rocks not more than six hundred yards off issued a big she-bear followed by two half-grown cubs, coming straight towards us. They topped the brink of the ravine; descended, still coming in our direction, and reached the snow-drift close to the place where we had crossed it earlier in the day. Suddenly the bears halted. There were our unfortunate footprints, the marks showing out clearly on the white, smooth surface. Fatal footsteps! The old bear looked round suspiciously, put her nose down to the snow, then turned, and, followed by her cubs, rushed up the mountain-side, and was soon lost to view in the deepening shades. It was now becoming quite dark, and it was useless to attempt to follow the big bear we had first seen, so there was nothing for it but to return disconsolately to camp, where we arrived tired and hungry late at night.

Next day I left my camp before daybreak, and went up to the highest hills to look for the bears. Soon after we reached the summit the whole mountain became enveloped in thick clouds, so that we could only see a few yards, and were obliged to sit down and wait until the clouds cleared off. We then started along a ridge dividing two large nullahs, and in the snow, not more than fifty yards from the place where we had been waiting, discovered the fresh tracks of a snow-leopard. There were plain marks where the great cat had sat up, and it must have been sitting there while we were befogged in the clouds, for there were no tracks when we first arrived on the ground. We followed the trail for a long distance, until at length it left the snow-line, and

could not be traced any farther. The snow-leopard is a rare animal, and is seldom seen, probably on account of its nocturnal habits. They have sometimes been shot when following ibex or feeding on the bodies of their victims, but the sportsmen who have met with them must be accounted very fortunate. There must have been several of these animals in the Satai nullah, for I saw their tracks almost daily, but never came across one. For some time after this I saw nothing. The weather was bad, and, although the bear and cubs were again viewed, we were unable to come up to them.

CHAPTER V

KASHMIR—(*continued*)

Charge and Death of a Bear—Ferocity of Bears—Jackal killed by an Ounce—One Bear killed, another missed—Bad Luck—Bear and Cubs sighted—Desperate Climb—Death of two Bears—Bear in a Sheepfold—The Heights above Bernai—A Herd of Ibex—A Bear killed—Night in a Cave—Return to Gurais—Musk-deer—More Bears—Length of Red Bears—Return to the Valley—Black Bear shot at Mullingaon—The Lolab Valley—Voyage to Srinagar—The Venice of the East—Bridges in Srinagar—Horrible Slums—Kashmiris—The Chenar Bagh—Flight of Importunate Merchants—The Dal Lake—Life in a House-boat—Unsuccessful Search for Black Bears—Colonisation of Kashmir—Mountain Villages—The Preservation of Game—Return to India.

A MONTH had now elapsed since the first and only bear was shot, and day after day I had toiled up the mountains and over the snow for many hours without success. On the morning of 25th May, after having wandered far over the hills, I decided to rest for a while, so lit a fire and made myself comfortable with a greatcoat and blanket. Snow was falling at about one o'clock, when my shikari aroused me and pointed out a bear feeding below. A short stalk brought us to a distance of about a hundred yards above the place where the animal was engaged in digging up roots, but I made a very bad shot, and missed him. The bear looked round, and before I could put in another shot he came straight up the hill at us. I sat still until he got within twenty yards, and then fired. The bullet struck

him between the neck and left shoulder, and passed through his heart, killing him dead on the spot, and he rolled over and over to the bottom of the ravine, leaving great splashes of blood in the snow. On arriving at the foot of the hill we found that the carcase had rolled into a deep cavern under the frozen snow, and it required the united efforts of myself and my men to haul the heavy body to the surface.

Having always been told that this species of bear is a very mild-tempered animal, never known to show fight, I have been in some doubt as to whether this one had any aggressive intention. Not being gifted with an acute sight or hearing, it is quite possible that he did not see me, or know where the strange noise, made by the rifle, came from. I am inclined to think, however, that this species is not less fierce than his black congeners, which have a well-earned reputation for ferocity. The fact is that the snow-bear is generally met with on open ground, and shot from a distance. Few animals will show fight in the open, or charge for a distance of more than a dozen yards. The black bear is usually found in thick jungle, and frequently met suddenly at a few paces distance. Given the same conditions, it seems highly probable that the snow-bear will be equally pugnacious.

Some sportsmen rather affect to despise bear-shooting, as being poor sport compared with the pursuit of tigers and other more dangerous game. Certainly, the bear is generally a comparatively mild-tempered animal, but he can be crusty on occasion. Moreover, one shoots bears on foot, and

not from a safe position as is usually the case in tiger-shooting. Of course, when a wounded tiger has to be followed up on foot, the summit of danger is reached, for the charge of such an animal will generally be fatal to the sportsman; whilst Bruin, although he can attack with a will, moves more slowly, and is therefore easier to stop. Even if he does get hold of one, the wounds inflicted by him, although sufficiently disagreeable, are not as likely to be fatal as those of a tiger or panther; but authenticated cases are on record of sportsmen and others having been killed outright by bears.

On my way back to camp after shooting this bear we found the remains of a jackal, evidently, from the marks in the surrounding snow, killed by a snow-leopard.

The following day my tent was moved a long way up the nullah above a salt-lick, once a noted place for ibex. The ibex, however, have nearly all been killed off, and it is doubtful if any worth shooting remained in the Tilail district. Near this salt-lick I killed a small bear, and missed a very fine one. The small one was killed with a good shot through the head as he was running across my front about a hundred and fifty yards off. He fell across a mountain rill, with his shattered head in the water, and the pure crystal was turned to a crimson stream. The big one was a long way off, almost straight below me, and we could get no nearer owing to the steepness of the ground. He was an enormous animal, and of such a white colour, with the hair on his shaggy sides hanging nearly to the ground, that he looked like a polar bear. A

roundabout stalk brought us to the place where we had first seen him; but he had moved off and taken up a position on a ridge on the opposite side of a ravine, whose precipitous declivity precluded all hope of a near approach. All this has taken a short time to relate, but the stalk had occupied five hours, and I was thoroughly done up on arriving on the rocks above. No doubt it would have been better to have waited for the animal to get to a more favourable place for stalking, but I was impatient, and did not like the idea of any more labouring up and down hill. It was a similar shot to the first one I had missed; my bullet again going high; a second shot was equally unsuccessful, and we soon saw the white bear going right away over the snow.

After this came some blank days, during which no game was seen.

I had now been five weeks on my shooting-ground; had fired at only five bears, and killed but three; and was so disgusted with my bad luck that I determined to return to the Kashmir Valley, halting at all likely places on the way. My want of success all this time may be attributed principally to the unfavourable weather, for scarcely a day passed without rain or snow—a circumstance sufficient to prevent the animals from emerging from their forest retreats until late in the evening, when the weather generally cleared.

In the grey morning of 30th May I sent my tents on to Prom Tilail, at the entrance to the Satai nullah, intending to shoot my way along the valley and arrive in camp by nightfall. Crossing the river by a bridge of snow, we scaled the heights on the



HIMALAYAN BEAR AND CUBS.

left bank, and marched along the crests of the hills overlooking the valley. Having seen nothing all the morning, we rested for a couple of hours during the heat of the day (for the sun was hot even at this great altitude), and in the afternoon moved along the mountains towards my camp. At about four o'clock we spied our old friends the big she-bear and her cubs. They were a long way off, high up in the hills on the far side of the nullah, and it was some time before I could make them out, even with the aid of my binoculars, although the sharp eyes of the villager who was with me discovered them at once. I hardly hoped to reach them. We must have been two thousand feet above the stream, whilst the bears were an equal height up on the opposite side. Nevertheless, I determined to make an effort to come up with them before dark, although it would tax all my energies to do so. As fast as we could, and in considerable danger of breaking our necks, we clambered down the declivity, sliding and floundering through the snow. Once I had a very narrow escape, for I slipped on the snow and went sliding down the drift with a velocity that increased every second. Fortunately, a friendly birch-tree stood in the way, and so saved me from being precipitated a sheer drop of some hundreds of feet on to the rocks below.

At length we arrived on the bank of the river, only to find that there was no bridge for miles, nearly all the snow-bridges having been by this time melted by the heat of the sun. The icy river was about four feet deep, and swollen with melted snow, whilst the current rushed foaming over the

rocks at a pace that seemed to render the passage impracticable. However, time was short, no other means of crossing could be devised, so we went in and waded across. I dropped my trusty alpenstock on the way, and was nearly swept off my legs by the torrent, but arrived safely on the other side, although in a most bedraggled condition, wet and cold, whilst my clothes had suffered considerably during the passage through 'bushes and over snow and rocks. Then came the climb up the steep side of the other hill.

My shikari conducted the stalk with great skill, keeping well out of sight, and with a view to the direction of the wind; so we at length arrived in an exhausted condition within eighty yards of the family of bears.

We were only just in time, for the sun was fast sinking behind the hills, and the gloom of night was beginning to settle over the mountains. I rested for a few moments watching the animals with interest. All unsuspicious of danger, the big bear stood on a small knoll across the ravine opposite to me, rooting up the grass with her great paws, and now and then pushing her nose into the earth to extract some succulent root. The young ones, which were well-grown, and much larger than I had thought, were turning over the stones and licking up the grubs beneath, stopping at times to play in the long grass, and rolling over each other like kittens. It was an easy shot; and the big one, shot through and through, fell dead to my first bullet. The cubs ran up the hill, but one had not got far before the second bullet knocked him over, and he rolled back

into the watercourse. The remaining cub, I am glad to say, escaped unharmed. Certainly, the cub should not have been shot, although it was some five feet in length; but immature animals of all kinds ought not to be molested. However, one commits deeds in the hot days of one's youth that may be regretted, if not atoned for, afterwards.

This was a hard day's work, with a satisfactory termination; and it was fortunate that we had only half a mile to go to camp, for it was dark before the bears were skinned.

On the first day of June my camp was moved to the village of Bernai, about five miles farther on, at the foot of the pass between Tilail and Gurais. Here news was brought in that three large ibex had passed over the hills that very morning, and also that two ponies had been killed by a snow-leopard in a neighbouring nullah some days previously. But I had reason to doubt the truth of these reports, which were probably concocted by my shikari, who was afraid that my return to the valley would deprive him of employment, and who therefore wished to keep me in the mountains as long as possible.

The sheep-killing bear had again been at work, and on the previous night he had destroyed five sheep in the village near which my camp was pitched; but it was useless following him, as he never remained long in one place, and tracking was difficult now that much of the snow was melted.

Looking from my tent in the evening, I saw a she-bear with a small cub on the opposite hill; but there were two impassable rivers between us, so

all that could be done was to sit and watch her. At night a great uproar arose in the village, a shouting of men and barking of dogs, due to a bear having tried to get into the sheepfold.

Next day I climbed the rocky heights above Bernai, passing on the way through a forest of deodars, many hundreds of which had been torn up and hurled to the ground, either by a hurricane or an avalanche. Whilst looking for game from a pinnacle of rock, a herd of ibex, consisting of some does and a small buck, passed close by me.

Shortly afterwards, a large light-coloured bear was sighted a long way below us, and we started to stalk it. On the way down I heard a rustling in some bushes about twenty yards off, and, on looking in the direction of the noise, saw a bear get up slowly from the undergrowth. He had evidently been roused from his slumbers, and before he could collect his senses I killed him with a shot through the neck, and at once hurried on to look for the first bear we had seen, which, however, could not be found. The sun was now high in the heavens, and Bruin had doubtless sought some secluded shade for his mid-day siesta.

The bear I had killed was a fine fellow, nearly six feet long. He had apparently been fighting, for one of his paws was injured, and he was much scratched about the face. Very likely the other bear we had seen was his opponent: the fight would have been a sight worth seeing, for with such coats as they had the air must have been thick with fur.

As the heights above Bernai appeared to be much frequented by game, I went up there next morning

with two days' provisions and some blankets, leaving orders for my camp to be taken on to Zarwan, in the Gurais valley. The mountain-tops were at a great altitude, and still covered with snow. Fortunately, we discovered a large cave, in which we passed two nights; but we could find no game, although there was a profusion of tracks of bears, ibex, musk-deer, and leopards.

Although the cave in which we slept was surrounded by snow, and was at a height of some fourteen thousand feet above sea-level, it was pleasantly warm—a great contrast to my tents below, where the nights were bitterly cold. It was lucky for us that we found this hospitable though primitive shelter; for the first night a heavy hailstorm came on, which would have rendered a bivouac in the snow exceedingly unpleasant. On arriving in camp at Zarwan I found the Gurais valley looking very picturesque with its green fields and pastures, its silvery brooks, and herds of sheep and cattle—a welcome change after the wild and rugged region in which I had passed the last six weeks.

It was not until 8th June that we found more game. On that day I left my camp at Gurais in the early morning, and went over a steep hill and through a thick forest of giant pines to the east of the village. In the morning a musk-deer was sighted sitting down in the wood, and I killed her with a shot through the body. She rolled a long way down the hill, and would have been precipitated into the river and lost for ever, but fortunately the body was stopped by a fallen tree. This was the second musk-deer brought to bag, one having been shot in

the Satai nullah, where they were very numerous, but where I did not molest them much, for fear of disturbing the bears. We skinned it, and cooked some venison on the spot, and found it to be of excellent flavour. This little animal has no horns, but the male has large canine tusks, and bears a musk-pod of considerable value. For the sake of this musk the animal has been almost exterminated in many parts of the Himalayas.

Having lunched of the musk-deer's flesh, we took up a position on the top of the hill, keeping a look-out for game; and later in the afternoon two snow-bears came out of some jungle far below, and ascended to a drift, where they amused themselves by alternately fighting and digging up the sprouting grass at the side of the snow. It was a long, difficult stalk, for the hill-side was very steep and slippery. My shikari informed me that a villager had lost his life there the previous year. He slipped on the snow, and fell into the torrent below, where his body was soon swept away beneath the snow and ice by the swirling current.

However, we arrived at the bottom without mishap, but the bears had disappeared. The wind was favourable, so we cautiously proceeded up the nullah in the direction where the animals had last been seen. Suddenly two grey heads popped up from behind the snow in front of me, not more than ten yards off, with a ludicrous expression of astonishment depicted on their countenances. I shot the biggest one, a fine male, through the neck, but allowed the other one to escape, and he made off as fast as he could.

This last bear measured five feet nine inches in length. This appears to be about their usual size; and out of seven killed by me only two exceeded six feet in length. My first bear was an enormous one, seven feet three inches long; and I think they are seldom seen of larger size.

This day terminated my shooting in the mountains, and on 10th June my camp was pitched at Kralpura, at the foot of the hills.

Although it was hot in the valley after the frosty nights of the mountains, I was not sorry to get down to the low country again. For hill-shooting is very hard work, and I would not recommend anyone to undertake such an expedition unless he is gifted with a considerable amount of perseverance and endurance.

My last shot was fired at a black bear, which was killed on 11th June, when my camp was pitched in an orchard near the village of Mullingaon, about a mile from the shore of the Wular Lake. Taking my rifle, I went out on the evening of my arrival to look for black bears, which frequent this part of the country in great numbers, coming down from the hills, generally at night, to search for fruit and feed in the Indian corn-fields. It was easy work compared to the labour of toiling over the mountains and rocks and snow. Here I had merely to stroll about in the low jungle among groves of mulberry-trees, within a short distance of my camp. After some time I sat down on a large boulder, which had been torn from the rocks above by the winter storm. A look-out man was posted on a slight eminence a few hundred yards off; and when after a short time

I looked in his direction he was signalling frantically. Picking up my rifle, I ran as fast as possible in the direction indicated. Mounting a low hill, I suddenly found myself within twenty yards of a black bear busily engaged in feeding among the branches of a mulberry-tree. The beast saw me almost immediately, and began to clamber down, but received a bullet in her stomach as she dropped to the ground from the lower branches. On reaching the ground she ran about uttering short, angry growls, and evidently in search of her assailant, but the jungle was so dense that neither of us could see the other. At length, guided by her growls and the movement in the bushes, I followed the beast up, and finished her off with a bullet in the head.

Soon after this adventure we crossed the mountains and descended into the Lolab Valley, the most fertile in Kashmir. It is a long, broad valley, enclosed by high mountains, covered with pine forests. The lower slopes of the hills bear groves of mulberry-trees, whilst in the valley itself cherries, plums, and apples grow in wild profusion. In the midst of the valley the Pohra River winds its silvery stream through rice-fields and stretches of green meadowland, and joins the Jhelum not far from Sopur, on the Wular Lake, a place famous for mahseer-fishing.

This valley was at one time quite the bear-garden of Kashmir, being infested by black bears, but most of them must have been driven off or killed; for I and my brother, who had now joined me, searched in vain for game during the five days

we remained in the Lolab valley before proceeding to Srinagar.

Those were indeed idyllic days. In the early morning we wandered about in search of bears, returning to camp in time for breakfast. After that we would sit at ease outside our tents on the bank overlooking the stream, and watch the trout feeding below. Then we would bathe, and gather fruit from the various trees, and in the evening resume our search for bears. On 21st June we embarked in a house-boat at Awatkulla, and set out for Srinagar. The two days' voyage was not very interesting. On the first day we journeyed down the river, but there was some delay when we arrived at the lake, owing to the timidity of our boatmen, who did not wish to cross, and were with some difficulty induced to do so, because the weather looked threatening and a somewhat stiff breeze was blowing. It is only just to say that their fears were not entirely without reason, for the flat-bottomed boats were easily upset, and the surface of the lake is frequently much disturbed by storms.

Srinagar has been called the Venice of the East, but truly it is a very dirty Venice, and it is doubtful if the city of the winged lion would be flattered by the comparison. It is intersected by many branches of the river, which afford every facility for good drainage; yet at the time of which I write there was no drainage at all, and the inner streets were in a fearful state of filth, whilst the main stream was a floating mass of corruption. The river is spanned by wooden

bridges of primitive construction, the buttresses being formed of huge pine-logs, laid in cross-layers one above the other; many of the buttresses are bent, and seem to be heeling over to the current.

The Jhelum forms the chief street of the city, and many well-built houses are on the water's edge, contrasting with the wretched hovels in the horrible slums which branch off from the main waterway. Some of the houses are crooked, half toppling over, and supported in places by huge logs of wood. These dwellings were displaced by the great earthquake which took place some years ago, when many people and houses were destroyed. All along the main street the inhabitants may be seen bathing, and washing clothes, and in the evening the whole population seems to come down to the water's edge for these purposes.

The women are remarkable for their beauty, being exceedingly fair, and having well-formed features. It is noticeable that the women and children of Kashmir seem to do nearly all the work, whilst the men are idle. Men could be seen lying lazily in cargo-boats which were being paddled up or down stream by their wives and children. My boat was anchored by the bank in the Chenar Bagh, a low-lying piece of ground, planted with great *chenar* (chestnut) trees, and backed by a line of tall poplars. At the foot of these gardens flows the crystal tide of Bendemeer's stream, a shallow river running in a weedy bed. This place is generally used as a camping-ground for bachelors, and is not noted either for healthiness or morality. No sooner were our tents

pitched here than we were besieged by a crowd of merchants; workers in silver and workers in brass; hawkers of cloth and leather goods; gunsmiths and watchmakers,—in fact, a host of rascals of every description. We had some difficulty in getting rid of these importunate dealers, but eventually they were put to flight with the aid of a bull-terrier.

Of all rascals your Kashmiri is the worst. He tries to swindle the unfortunate traveller in every way, and no merchant would think of asking less than double the right price for any article.

Srinagar was almost empty, as far as visitors from India were concerned. Most of them had gone to Gulmarg, far up the slopes of the Pir Panjal range, where people retire at this time of the year to escape the heat, which is considerable even in the Vale of Kashmir.

There is not much to do in Srinagar, but it is an interesting city, and one can take pleasant trips by boat up and down the streams beyond the town. After a few days' stay in the Chenar Bagh we went to the Dal Lake, and encamped for a short time in the Nasim Bagh, a beautiful grove of great chestnut-trees, situated on a stretch of ground sloping gently down to the lake. Then we moved on in a northerly direction to Gunderbal, where the river was icy cold with the melted snows of the mountains that rise above, and where the climate was pleasantly cool after the comparative heat of Srinagar.

At the beginning of July we grew tired of this life of idleness, and again went to the country on

the far side of the Wular Lake, in the hope of finding a few black bears; but we were not fortunate enough to come across any, although there were plenty of marks. One day we beat some small nullahs with a horde of yelling natives, but nothing came out of the jungle. On another occasion we went out by moonlight and wandered about half the night, but the mulberry-trees were all empty.

The climate in the Valley of Kashmir is mild, and in the hills is bracing, and the country appears to be pre-eminently suited to English constitutions, and admirably adapted for colonisation. It might with advantage be colonised by Englishmen: and what barrier against foreign agression could be more effective than one formed of our own countrymen? The soil is fertile, and requires only labour to become one of the best grain-producing countries in the world. Fruit of all kinds grows in abundance without the labour of man's hands; whilst flocks of sheep and herds of cattle thrive on the inexhaustible pasture-lands. The wine-growing industry is also doubtless capable of extension and improvement, for already a fair quantity of excellent wine is produced.

I was much struck by the peculiar habits of the people living in the Himalayan villages, and their difference in almost every respect from the inhabitants of the Valley of Kashmir proper, from whom indeed they appear to be a distinct race.

The houses in these mountain villages are built of pine-logs laid one on the top of another, and

covered by a roof of logs and mud. No attempt is made to fill up the interstices between the logs of the walls, so that the icy wind blows in from every quarter. Perhaps it is well that this is the case, for the villagers are not by any means cleanly in their habits, and it is therefore not at all desirable to exclude the fresh air. Such was the outward appearance of the log huts; but I never ventured inside one, and possibly the interstices were blocked up from the inside. The people live in a state of extreme squalor; men, horses, sheep, all huddled up together in one house. In the winter they hibernate after the manner of the bears which inhabit their inhospitable clime. They shut themselves up in their houses with their flocks, and live upon the stores of grain laid up for the winter, whilst there is an unlimited supply of water obtainable from the snow surrounding the dwellings on all sides. Small patches of ground are cultivated, but the people live almost entirely by their herds of cattle and sheep; whilst they manufacture their own cloth and blankets from the wool of the latter. They are very parsimonious, as was proved to me in a remarkable manner. When a bear killed a large number of sheep in the village of Bernai, the headmen of several hamlets in the vicinity came and begged me to collect beaters and drive the jungle for the destroyer. They would provide a hundred beaters, at my expense, at four annas a man. Not even for their own benefit would these men work for nothing, although they were idle at this season. They preferred to run the risk of losing their sheep.

Some of the villagers at Prom Tilail were said to be very well-off, and to have hoards of money hidden away: not only money is buried, but they dig immense holes in the ground for the storage of *ghee*, or clarified butter. These stores pass on from father to son, and some of them last twenty years. What a state the *ghee* must be in at the end of that period! But then, as my shikari frequently remarked, the villagers eat food from which a bear would turn with disgust.

In the Happy Valley the people have far better houses, and are certainly more civilised, living in a condition of comparative comfort now that the government of the country is under British supervision, and they are relieved from oppression. The rajah is a Hindu, and the majority of the population is Mahomedan; so there used to be, if possible, more oppression than is usually the case in native States.

The wild animals in Kashmir have been steadily decreasing year by year, and the sportsman has now to wander far in search of game. This decrease of game is partly due to native shikaris, who used to kill numbers of animals and sell the trophies to travellers in Srinagar. More shame to those who purchased them! The sale of trophies is now prohibited, so the game has a better chance. It is not, however, only native shikaris, but European hunters themselves who are largely responsible for the diminution of the wild beasts. For some men kill anything they come across, irrespective of size, and animals thus have not a fair chance of attaining maturity.

Others visit the Kashmir shooting-grounds year after year and slay great numbers of animals, being apparently possessed by an insatiable desire for slaughter. The real sportsman is satisfied with a few good heads, and, having obtained these, will not molest animals that carry lesser trophies.

Until the European sportsmen take matters into their own hands, and limit their shooting to a reasonable number of mature animals, they cannot expect the Kashmir Government to undertake any measures of legislation for the preservation of game.

Towards the end of July I received an appointment in a regiment of the Hyderabad Contingent, for which I had applied with the object of obtaining better sport in the way of big-game shooting than could be had in the Punjab, where there are practically no large animals. Marching rapidly from Srinagar, I reached Ferozepore about a week later, and, having packed up my belongings, departed for the station of Ellichpur, in Berar, where I looked forward to obtaining good sport in the highlands of Central India.

CHAPTER VI

BERAR

Geography and History of the Province—The Mahrattas—The Korkus—Malarial Fever—The Hyderabad Contingent—Climate of Berar—Education in India—The Satpura Hills—Game in the Satpuras—Fauna of Berar—Ellichpur—Scorpions and Snakes—Chikalda—Gawilgarh—Extract from Wellington's Despatches—Muktagiri—Antelope-shooting—Great Bustard—Wolves—Man-eating Pack of Wolves—Gazelle-shooting—Barking Deer—Four-horned Antelope—A Jungle Pool.

THE dreary Punjab at the end of July was at furnace-heat, and the few days spent at Ferozepore were the most trying in all my experience, but speeding southward I soon reached a more delectable country, for Central India is comparatively cool during the monsoon months from June to September, and the forests and green plains were very pleasant to the eye after the drab of the northern deserts. Berar, or the Hyderabad Assigned Districts, is a considerable tract of country lying to the north of the independent State of Hyderabad, of which it formerly composed a portion. The province was, in 1853, assigned by treaty with the Nizam to the British Government for the payment of the troops of the Hyderabad Contingent—a force which the Nizam is obliged to keep up, but for the pay of which he had fallen into large arrears of debt to the Government of India. Berar was therefore

assigned as a security for the payment of these troops, the province having since then been administered by the Indian Government, whilst the surplus revenue, after the payment of all expenses of administration, is handed over to the Nizam of Hyderabad.

Perhaps in no part of India are the advantages of British rule so apparent as in this small province, contrasting as it does with the adjacent independent State. The country is intersected by metalled roads in every direction; it is almost all under cultivation, and the inhabitants, freed from oppression, live in peace and prosperity, whilst the revenue from the forests and other sources has enormously increased under the administration of British officials. The inhabitants of Berar are mostly Mahrattas, a famous and warlike race in days gone by, but now given to sedition, agriculture, and other peaceful pursuits; whilst, being a highly intelligent and educated race, they furnish most of the clerks in the Government offices. There is also a fair number of Mahomedans scattered in the various villages, whilst the forests of the Satpura hills are peopled by an aboriginal tribe called Korkus, who are allied to the Gonds. These junglemen live by cutting wood and bamboos in the reserved forests, where they also cultivate small patches of land around their villages. Perhaps they have suffered loss by the British rule, for they feel the weight of the forest laws, being only allowed a very small area of land for cultivation, whilst the wild beasts that abound in the fire-protected region ravage their crops. They are fairly good hunters,

but cannot track like the Gonds. They worship the bison as a god, but, although they will not touch the animal, they have no objection to showing the sportsman the haunts of their bovine deities. These aborigines suffer very much from malarial fever, and sometimes also from epidemics of cholera. The Melghat district of the Satpura hills near Ellichpur is notoriously unhealthy, except during the hottest season of the year, and the inhabitants, presumably owing to want of stamina, appear unable to withstand the effects of malaria, which is rarely fatal to Europeans, but is the cause of death of many thousands of natives every year.

Ellichpur is the only military station in Berar. It is garrisoned by a portion of the Hyderabad Contingent, a force consisting of four regiments of cavalry, four batteries of field artillery, and six battalions of infantry, officered by British officers of the Indian Staff Corps. It was called into existence at the beginning of the century for the protection of the State, in those turbulent times when our ally the Nizam was threatened by the Sultan of Mysore and by the Mahrattas and marauding Rohillas. In days gone by the force was one of great utility, and was frequently employed in the suppression of disturbances and in destroying wandering hordes of Rohilla robbers. The State of Hyderabad is now, and has been since the Mutiny of 1857, in a condition of profound peace, so the original *raison d'être* of the Hyderabad Contingent has ceased to exist, and the force is only kept up by virtue of the old treaty. It is, however, available for employment outside the dominions of the

Nizam, and part of it has been on active service in Burma, whilst lately a regiment has been employed in the Reserve Brigade of the Tirah Expeditionary Force at Peshawar.

The cavalry regiments are composed of Sikhs, Jats, and Deccani Mahomedans, all good fighting men, and are not excelled by the best regiments of our native army. As an instance of their services in time of war, it may be mentioned that the 3rd Lancers distinguished themselves in many actions before and during the Mutiny, including Mahidpur, Jhansi, Kalpi, Gwalior, and Morar, and were also employed in the Burmese campaign of 1887.

The field batteries of artillery are most efficiently manned and horsed, and require only a more modern gun to be fit for any service, for they are at present armed with smooth-bores of ancient and obsolete pattern. The infantry regiments are recruited principally in the North-West Provinces of India, and include in their ranks a large proportion of Rajputs. They are therefore very similar in composition to the native infantry regiments of the Bengal Army, whilst they possess the distinction of having remained true to their salt in the Mutiny of 1857.

I have given a somewhat detailed description of this force, as little seems to be known of its history and composition, not only in England, but even in India itself, where local corps are apt to be forgotten, as they vegetate in small stations, where the officers have no chance of advancement. The climate of Berar is generally healthy, and I found it less

trying than that of Northern India, for there are no great extremes of heat and cold, whilst the hot weather does not approach that of the Punjab in severity, and lasts only for a comparatively short period. Moreover, the nights during the hot weather are not as oppressive as in the north, although at Ellichpur we suffered sometimes from a disagreeable hot night wind, which rendered sleeping in the open very unpleasant. Education has made great progress among the Mahratta Brahmins of Berar, and numbers of them speak and write English. In most of the larger villages schools have been established by Government, where both vernacular languages and English are taught. Here, as in Bengal, this high education appears to inculcate in the natives a desire for political life and an ambition for self-government on English lines, for which they are as yet utterly unsuited.

In Berar, as elsewhere in British territory, the natives are not allowed to carry arms, but in the dominions of the Nizam of Hyderabad every black bristles with an armoury of daggers and other weapons. This warlike appearance generally belies the real character of the ostensible warrior, who is usually mild and inoffensive, to say the least of it. To this, however, the Arabs and Rohillas are an exception, for they are truculent fellows, ready to use their weapons on occasion.

Berar is an ideal country for the sportsman and naturalist, containing as it does a great variety of game on its cultivated plains and valleys, and on the jungle-clad mountains, especially on the well-wooded slopes of the Satpura hills. No pen can

describe the glories, no imagination can depict the beauties, of the Satpura Mountains. There are to be found every variety of scenery, and many varieties of game. There are great precipices and gentle slopes and mighty peaks, and undulating prairies covered with waving grass. There the mighty bison wanders over the hills, and crops the bamboo shoots on their forest-clad sides, and in the heat of day lies in the shade of some giant tree, whose gnarled trunk and leafy canopy shield him from the rays of the scorching sun; or else he seeks some deep cool glen, where the sun never reaches the silent pools. There, on the mountain-side, the sambhur—noblest of stags—wanders from brake to brake; and in the watercourses the fierce tiger slinks to his den at dawn of day, silently stalking with velvet footfall in the shady places of the forest, accompanied by the chattering of the monkeys, the harsh cry of the pea-fowl, and the bark of the little russet deer.

In Berar are found also panthers, hunting-leopards, bears, hyenas, wolves, wild dogs, spotted deer, barking deer, blue bull, black buck, gazelle, and four-horned antelope; the feathered game comprises the bustard, florican, pea-fowl, grey jungle-fowl, spur-fowl, sand-grouse, painted francolin, grey partridge, and quail of various kinds; whilst migratory birds, such as duck, teal, and snipe arrive in the cold weather.

The geographical nature of the country is admirably suited for game of all kinds, consisting as it does of mountains and forests and rivers, and extensive tracts of jungle-covered plain; whilst the

Berar Valley is unequalled for fertility by any region in India.

The station of Ellichpur, where I first joined the Hyderabad Contingent, is situated at the foot of an offshoot of the Satpura hills, thirty-two miles from the railway station at Amraoti, the chief town of Berar. The garrison consists of an infantry regiment and a battery of artillery. The cantonment is very picturesque, containing many fine trees, whilst the principal road, on the sides of which stand the officers' bungalows, is bordered by bamboo clumps and fine tall trees. The bungalows in Ellichpur were very old, and mostly so out of repair as to let in a considerable amount of water during the rainy season. They were the habitations of innumerable scorpions, centipedes, and other horrible creatures, whilst the floor of one's room would frequently be found a crawling mass of black ants.

Snakes, both poisonous and otherwise, were also sometimes found in the bungalows, and I recollect almost treading on *kraits* on several occasions. This is a small and deadly species of snake, more common than the cobra and other such poisonous vermin.

Sometimes panthers and other wild animals prowled about the cantonment at night. Once an officer of my regiment awoke in the middle of the night to find a hyena standing at his bedside, whilst during the last few weeks of my stay at Ellichpur a panther frequently visited the regimental lines, which were situated on the fringe of the station not very far from the jungle-clad slopes of the Saptura

hills. About twenty miles from the cantonment is the hill-station of Chikalda, the summer resort of the Berar officials, situated at a height of some 3700 feet above sea-level, and therefore enjoying a comparatively cool climate all the year round. Not far from Chikalda is the ruined fort of Gawilgarh, built by Ahmed Shah in the year 1420, of which the following account may be read in Wellington's despatches:—

"The fort of Gawilgarh is situated on a range of mountains between the sources of the rivers Purna and Tapti. It stands on a lofty mountain in this range, and consists of one complete inner fort, which fronts to the south where the rock is most steep, and an outer fort, which covers the inner to the north and north-west. This outer fort has a third wall, which covers the approach to it from the north by the village of Labáda. All these walls are strongly built, and fortified by ramparts and towers. The communications with the fort are through three gates—one to the south with the inner fort, one to the north-west with the outer fort, and one to the north with the third wall."

In 1803 Wellington, after defeating Scindia at the battle of Argaon, invested the fort, which was occupied by the Mahrattas. He sent a division under Stevenson up the hills through the Damangaon Pass, and round to Labáda, where batteries were set up, a breach made, and the fort stormed and taken on 15th December—a most difficult operation successfully carried out, as Wellington himself said.

The fort was dismantled in 1858. It contains

several old guns, one of which is said to have a considerable quantity of gold and silver in its composition,—with what degree of truth I know not; but if this were a fact, it would probably have long since been melted down.

About six or seven miles from Ellichpur, in the Satpura hills, are the beautiful Muktagiri Falls, where a stream drops from rocky heights to the valley below. This is accounted a sacred spot by the Hindus, and a number of temples have been built there, where dwelt many priests, some clad in ashes and some in salmon-coloured robes, who looked after the temples.

Above Muktagiri, at the back of a hill called Chorpahar, was some very thick jungle, the occasional resort of tigers. In 1890, during the rainy season, a tigress made its appearance there and committed extensive depredations among the herds of cattle that had gone up to the grazing-grounds on the hills. On receiving this intelligence I sent off my tent and camp equipage, which had to be carried up the mountain path by coolies, and encamped in the depth of the jungle on the bank of a small rivulet. The tigress had, however, departed, and I found nothing but the remains of many of its victims, and the tracks of its great paws in many places. I remained there three days, hoping that the animal would return, and had a very uncomfortable time of it, for it rained almost unceasingly, and an eight-foot square tent is not the most desirable of habitations under such circumstances. The jungle appeared a paradise for game, yet it seemed to contain very little, and I saw only a four-horned

antelope, which I shot. A few blue bull were also seen by my men, but I did not get a sight of them.

Not far from Muktagiri was the village of Bairam, where an annual fair was held. It was said to be remarkable from the fact that on a hill where goats were slain during the fair no flies ever made their appearance. I visited the fair, but had no opportunity of testing the truth of this statement, which, however, has been confirmed by Europeans; so there is little wonder that the natives looked on it as a miraculous circumstance.

In the vicinity of Ellichpur, during the two years of my stay there, I obtained some very good shooting, and here made my first acquaintance with the black buck, or Indian antelope.

The Christmas after my arrival it was my good fortune to be invited to spend a few days with some friends who were out in camp thirty miles from cantonments. Late on the evening of 24th December I rode out fifteen miles into the country, and encamped on the bank of a small river. I was up before sunrise next morning, and the air struck very chill as I rode off towards my destination—a contrast to the fierce heat of the tropical sun a few hours later. The country was flat, and all under cultivation. For miles stretched fields of wheat, cotton, and millet, with sparsely-scattered acacia-trees, and here and there a patch of thick jungle, or a deep watercourse, now dry with the drought of months. Northwards could be distinguished the dim blue outline of the Satpura range, where big game of all kinds abounds; but here in the plains only antelope

are found, and less commonly a few gazelle and bustard.

The sun had just risen, when we viewed two fine black buck about five hundred yards off: one was a splendid fellow, whose glossy black and white coat shone in the morning sun. We moved to within two hundred yards of him, when he began to grow restless, so I thought it time to take a shot. My bullet told loudly on his flank, but he was hit too far back, and disappeared in the high millet-crops, where we searched for him in vain. Shortly afterwards a herd was sighted, and a careful stalk behind a large ant-hill brought me within shooting distance. There was only one black buck with the herd, and my bullet broke his foreleg high up near the shoulder. Away he went on three legs; so mounting my pony I rode after him, and came up with and speared him after a run of over a mile. These antelopes are wonderfully tenacious of life, and can go at a great pace even when hard hit or on three legs. Indeed, a sportsman (whose veracity is not, however, quite unimpeachable) tells a story of how he shot all four legs off a buck in succession, and that the animal was not even then done for, but continued to run on its stumps.

Hardly had I dismounted from my horse after this run, when two great bustard were sighted in a cotton-field. They were feeding close to the edge of a field of millet, where the crop was over six feet in height, so there seemed every prospect of my being able to approach within gunshot of them. I rode back for my gun, and then proceeded to push my way through the high millet-stalks, expecting to

emerge close to the place where the bustard were feeding, but had not gone far when one rose too far off for the two shots I fired at him to have any effect; the other bird was not seen again. The bustard is a very wary fowl, and I have never yet succeeded in bringing one to bag, although I have seen a fair number and have had a shot at one with a rifle.

After this, many miles were traversed without a shot. Once a herd of antelope dashed by at a gallop at no great distance, but they were far away by the time I had dismounted and got my rifle. At length a large herd was descried grazing close to the road. There were several fine bucks in the herd, so I knocked over the biggest, which turned out to have horns twenty-two and a half inches long—a length seldom exceeded in this part of the country, although they grow much longer in Northern India. Next day began badly. I was out at daybreak, but could hit nothing until nearly mid-day, when a buck running past me over a hundred and fifty yards off, as only a buck can run, was knocked over by a good or fortunate shot. These running shots, or a long gallop after a wounded buck, constitute the sport of antelope-shooting, which is otherwise fun of a very mild type, for neither good shooting nor skilful stalking is required, except where the animals have been much hunted. Next day I lost another wounded buck, which escaped into some thick jungle at dusk, and no doubt was killed by wolves or jackals during the night. This losing of wounded animals is one of the great drawbacks of antelope-shooting, and many must be lost when the crops are

so high as to favour their escape. When the crops are cut, a wounded buck can generally be ridden down.

The following day I was due in cantonments sixteen miles off, for our camp had been moved one stage nearer. Before starting for Ellichpur I shot a fine old buck through the heart. He was standing in a cotton-field, and after receiving the bullet he galloped about fifty yards, and then pitched forward on to his head stone-dead. He was doubtless the hero of many a fight, but his day had long passed, for his horns were broken off short, and worn quite smooth at the tips; so that, being unable any longer to hold his own in the herd, he led a solitary life.

Wolves were reported to be about in this district; and one was seen, but he was very cunning, and cantered away at sight without giving me a shot. I have since met with wolves on about half a dozen occasions, but have never had the fortune to shoot one. They are long lanky beasts, varying in colour from reddish-brown to grey. Once I was stalking a gazelle, when a wolf came bounding out of a field of millet not far off, and lay down panting in the deep shadow formed by an irregularity of the ground close to me. I fired at him immediately, but he got up and trotted slowly off, leaving me too astonished at having missed him to fire again. In some parts of India they do a great deal of damage, killing many children; but in Berar they seem generally to confine their attention to sheep and goats, although I recollect a child being brought to the hospital at Ellichpur with its throat torn open by one of these

animals. In 1891 a pack of wolves took to man-killing in the Hoshungabad district of the Central Provinces, and, it was said, killed over a hundred human beings before they were destroyed.

We used to shoot many gazelle in the lower hills from six to sixteen miles from Ellichpur. These animals afford better sport than the antelope, for they are more difficult to approach, and offer a very small mark. They are very pretty and graceful animals, with their lyrate horns, which in this part of India seldom exceed eleven inches in length, although they grow a couple of inches longer in the north, where the Bikanir desert is a good locality for them. Sometimes I have chased them for miles, topping hill after hill in the pursuit, and have at length obtained a fairly easy shot from the crest of the high ground. They utter a sharp hiss on being disturbed, and sometimes stand and gaze at the intruder, but more often bound off to a distance before turning to satisfy their curiosity. Perhaps the best of the small deer is the khakur, or barking deer, which abounds in the Satpura hills, and has afforded me excellent sport during many shooting expeditions. This little animal, called also the muntjac, or rib-faced deer, stands about twenty-seven inches high, and is of a reddish colour, with two curious folds of skin on its face. The male bears small horns standing on hairy pedicles of bone. The horns are cast, as far as my observation showed me, in March, and are mature again in October, thus corresponding in this respect with the sambhur stag, which inhabits the same jungles.

The sharp bark of this animal on the hill-side is

a welcome sound, telling, as it frequently does, of the presence of a tiger or other beast of prey. I have found a rook rifle the best weapon for this game, as it is light, and a well-placed shot will always drop a khakur, whilst the report does not disturb the jungle when one is in pursuit of bison or other big game inhabiting the same localities. It requires a sharp eye to detect the little russet deer as he stands motionless in the forest, gazing intently at the disturber of his peace. Frequently the first notice the sportsman has of his presence is a bark and the flicking of a red and white tail as the deer bounds away into the thicket.

The stalker must be ever on the alert, so that even the movement of an ear will attract his attention; and he must fire quickly, or the little animal will be off. As it is difficult to distinguish the sexes in the thick forest, one cannot help shooting does sometimes. The best khakur I have shot had horns six and a half inches long above the hairy pedicle. This is a good head, but not an unusually fine one. I once saw four barking deer feeding on the blossoms that had fallen from a *mohwa* tree, but more than two are rarely found together. The little four-horned antelope inhabits the same jungles as the khakur, and has very similar habits; but it does not require such high ground for its habitat, and is found alike on hill and plain. They generally seem to prefer long grass and more open ground, although I have shot them in very dense jungle. Like the barking deer they are generally seen in pairs, but sometimes three or four are found together. The four-horned antelope varies much as regards both its

size and its horns. I have shot some with well-developed anterior horns, whilst others possess instead mere black callosities, and some have no anterior horns at all. These latter animals, according to my observation, appear to be smaller than the others, and it is not improbable that there may be two species of this genus in India, although it is more likely that they are merely varieties. The usual length of fully-developed anterior horns is about one inch, and posterior horns four inches, but I shot one antelope in the Ellichpur district with anterior horns of the unusual length of nearly two and a half inches, and another two inches.

Some of the pleasantest days of my recollection are connected with the pursuit of the barking deer and four-horned antelope in the Satpura hills. There was one place some fifty miles from Ellichpur where I used to camp, a favourite resort of both these animals, and with my rook rifle I have shot numbers in the open glades and on the borders of the forest. When sitting over water in the evening watching for panthers, I have seen them come cautiously down to the pool just beneath my tree, or heard the warning bark of a khakur up the nullah giving timely notice of the approach of a beast of prey. On these occasions they were of course not molested, and it was interesting to watch the animals at such close quarters. Once there was quite a collection of wild beasts near a tree in which I had posted myself over the only pool of water that existed for a radius of some miles in that dense jungle. There were khakur and four-horned antelope; pea-fowl, grey jungle-fowl, spur-fowl, and

monkeys of two kinds, all in sight, some drinking at the pool, and some feeding beneath the tree and in the surrounding jungle. Suddenly a khakur barked about a hundred yards off up the nullah, repeating the cry at intervals. In a few moments every living thing disappeared, except the monkeys, which sprang up the trees and chattered loudly as a panther came in sight and stalked silently towards the water.

This occurred in my early and inexperienced days. I had forgotten to cock my rifle beforehand, and now neglected to raise the hammers silently; so the panther, hearing the click of the spring, bounded off straightway into the jungle, and when he came to the water again half an hour later it was so dark that my bullet missed him, as I could not take proper aim.

The small deer doubtless lead a precarious existence, for they have many enemies to contend with, and I have found their remains in the stomachs of panthers and wild dogs.

In beating for pea-fowl or jungle-fowl they are often killed in large numbers with a shot-gun, but I have never myself indulged in that method of bringing them to bag, deeming it better sport to stalk and shoot them with the rifle.

It is strange how strong and tenacious of life the four-horned antelope is, although such a small animal. One which had both his fore-legs broken managed to get a considerable distance before being found, whilst another one, hit in the stomach by a bullet from an express rifle, ran a couple of hundred yards, leaving a broad bloody trail in the long grass, before he dropped dead.

CHAPTER VII

BERAR (*continued*)

Wild Dogs—Panthers near Ellichpur—Habits of Panthers—Methods of shooting them—Death of a Panther—Mode of killing Prey—Man-eating Panthers—A Midnight Vigil—Panther Cub—A Wounded Tigress—Expedition to the Melghat Forest—Charge of a Bear—Death of a Bear and Cub—A Fierce She-Bear—Lesser Civet Cat—Panther shot—Bear visits my Camp—Two Bison shot—Ratels—Bear killed—Panther in the Camp—Wild Dog shot—Watch for a Panther—Eclipse of the Moon—Night Shooting—Bison killed by Tiger—Sandgrouse-shooting—Duck at Darberi—Pardis—Cruelty of Natives—Voyage of the *Crocodile*.

PACKS of wild dogs abound in the jungle north of Ellichpur, where they are very destructive to the game. The sportsman should lose no opportunity of destroying them, for a pack of these creatures will in a short time denude a whole district of game. In suitable localities they may not infrequently be seen in full cry after a sambhur, and the heads of many noble stags which have fallen victims to their destructiveness may be picked up in the forest.

But not only owing to their propensity for slaying game are the wild dogs deadly enemies of the sportsman; for by driving the animals out of the country they cause the retreat of the tigers also, and even, it is said, will on occasion attack the striped monarch of the forest himself and deprive him of his hard-won prey. I have heard authentic accounts of

panthers having been tree'd by dogs, so it is not improbable that they will attack tigers also.

Once, when in search of tigers, I came to a most promising-looking nullah with shade and water in abundance, which I deemed a sure find, having killed a tigress there the previous year. Yet not a mark of a tiger could be found—a seemingly unaccountable circumstance, until my shikaris reported that they had come upon a pack of nine wild dogs in the valley. The first dog that I shot was a solitary one. He ran down in the early morning to drink at a pool of water over which I had been sitting all night, and was shot through the body. He had a good red coat and black-tipped brush. The jungle-men who were with me took his liver out for medicinal purposes, but I do not know what virtuous properties it was supposed to possess. The next one, shot with a rook rifle, was also a solitary dog. He made off after being hit, shedding a pungent ammoniac secretion on his tail, which could be smelt at a distance of some yards. Perhaps this is the liquid which, according to native stories, the *dhole* or wild dog whisks with his tail into the eyes of his victims to blind them.

The wild dog is one of the few denizens of the jungle that has no dangerous enemy save man; and bold indeed would be the wild beast, whether tiger or leopard, that ventured to attack a pack of these creatures.

One day when stalking bison I came close to a pack of dogs in a glade of the forest; and they were so bold and showed at first such determination to hold their ground that it would not have been sur-

prising had they opposed my advance. Nor was it until I approached within thirty yards that the last of the pack trotted off and disappeared in the shades of the forest. I once heard of a pack that had done considerable damage among the herds belonging to the inhabitants of a village on the edge of the forest; but they generally appear to confine their operations to game, and do not often molest domestic animals.

Panthers were numerous near Ellichpur, both about the villages in the vicinity and in the jungles on the Satpura hills. I will not enter into the oft-discussed question of the different species or varieties of the panther or leopard. Suffice it to say that such differences do not appear as distinct as some writers have asserted, for the so-called different species or varieties seem to be blended together by intermediate forms, as regards colour, size, and texture of fur. All panthers are rapacious and blood-thirsty, generally bold in the extreme, yet cunning and cowardly. I have occasionally, but not frequently, found them in dense jungle preying principally on game. One killed in such a locality had the remains of a monkey in its stomach. On two occasions I have found them in attendance on tigers, probably attracted by the hope of getting a feed after the larger animal had finished with his kill. As a rule they haunt the outskirts of villages, where numerous footmarks on the paths betray the presence of the nightly prowler, who may frequently be shot over a goat at dusk or on moonlight nights. In such places the panthers follow the herds of goats on their grazing grounds in the vicinity, and carry

off stragglers, or else prowl round the villages and seize the *pariah* dogs.

Among the various methods of bringing panthers to bag, there is a practice obtaining among some sportsmen of shooting them in a rather strange manner, borrowed from native shikaris. A hole is dug in the ground near the haunts of the marauding beast. Over the hole is fixed a *charpoy*, or native cot, an aperture being left to shoot through, and a goat tethered as bait a yard or two off. In this hole a gunner takes up his position armed with a gun charged with buckshot, and from his place of safety he blows up the luckless panther, when, attracted by the bleating of the goat, he comes to take his prey.

This is not a method that will commend itself to most sportsmen, and I have never indulged in it; nor, in my opinion, is the practice of sitting in ambush to wait for animals a very sporting mode of obtaining one's game, but it is sometimes the only one possible. It is far better to drive the animal out by daylight, and to shoot it from a tree or from the ground.

I have also heard of so-called sportsmen who were in the habit of shooting tigers with poisoned bullets, in order to obviate all danger to themselves from wounded animals. This is little better than poisoning the carcases of animals that have been killed by beasts of prey, and all such unsportsmanlike methods should be discountenanced.

When at Ellichpur, I heard one day that a panther had killed a calf the previous evening near a thickly-wooded nullah in the midst of the cotton-fields, about two miles from the cantonment.

Having sent my shikari out to the place with a goat to tie up, I rode out in the afternoon and sat in a tree over the goat. In about half an hour the panther, attracted by the goat's bleating, rushed out on to the unfortunate creature, and seized it by the throat. There were men working in the fields all round at the time, and the main road was only a few hundred yards off.

This panther measured six and a half feet in length, and was very heavy and thickly-built, having a great girth of chest and large paws. There were some porcupine quills in his paws, showing that he had lately been driven to slaying one of these animals for food. As I was not more than four or five yards off, the panther's mode of killing his prey was easily observed. He sprang out of the bushes and launched himself on to the goat with a half-spring half-rush. With his hind-feet remaining on the ground, he clasped his victim round the shoulders and chest with his paws, and seized its neck in his jaws from the back. Only a few seconds elapsed between the time the beast sprang out and his death, for I fired on the instant, hoping to save the goat's life.

On receiving the shot, the panther still clung on with teeth and claws with the tenacity of death, but, his hold gradually relaxing, he slipped to the ground, and soon lay dead beside his victim. The latter was not dead, but still stood, though its life-blood was fast ebbing through the fang-holes in its throat, so I ordered it to be killed.

Regular man-eating panthers and tigers are very rare, although, no doubt, panthers frequently carry off and devour children. But the reports of such

occurrences are always exaggerated by the people, and a beast that has slain a few children may be magnified into the fell destroyer of a hundred victims. No doubt, cases do occur of tigers and panthers taking almost entirely to preying on human beings, but such cases are few and far between.

In the hot weather of 1891, when I was at Ellichpur, a beast of prey appeared and took up its abode among a lot of dry watercourses in the middle of the cultivation near the village of Assegaon, some sixteen miles off in the plains, far from all jungle and from the hills. Report said that it had killed many people, and that it was a man who had turned into a wild beast on having a stone thrown at him by his wife—a common superstition among natives, like that of the wehr-wolf in some parts of Europe.

On receiving this news, I rode out at mid-day to a village where this animal had killed a child a short time before. As usual, reports had been much exaggerated, and I could only discover that besides carrying off this child he had wounded a man and a boy, and killed a number of goats. The natives averred that the thing was tailless and black; none but the wounded people had seen it by daylight; and from this account it seemed probable that the beast was a wolf, although they declared it to be a devil.

The country was cut up by a network of watercourses, in the banks of which were innumerable deep fissures, where it would be useless to search for the animal, as my time was limited to a day and a night. At night my bed was placed on the

outskirts of the village, in the shadow of a hut, and two goats were picketed some ten yards from me. From this hut a little girl about five years old had been carried off by the monster two nights before, and devoured in the neighbouring watercourse. The moon sank gradually, and, before midnight, disappeared behind the dark line of the horizon, and I went to sleep. At about three o'clock I awoke with an indefinable feeling that some wild animal was near. All my senses were alert on the instant. Surely there is some instinct which arouses one on such occasions, for I have awoke before with the same feeling under similar circumstances. The goats coughed hoarsely (sure sign of fear), and I saw through the gloom of night the dark form of a small panther creep over the sky-line in their direction. As it was a starlight night, objects could be distinguished up to about ten yards; beyond that distance all was merged in darkness, save where things were clearly defined against the sky-line. Coming in my direction, the panther disappeared in the gloom. Leaning over the side of the bed I seized my rifle, and then saw the midnight murderer, which had probably discerned the movement, going away along the sky-line. The shot immediately fired elicited an answering growl, and the beast disappeared. Nor could I discover any sign of him next day, but his depredations ceased from that night; and it was subsequently reported that the headman of the village of Karasgaon, some miles off, had shortly afterwards killed a panther with a broken leg.

Whilst I was at Ellichpur a case occurred at

Chikalda, in the Satpura hills, where a panther seized a man who was sleeping in the verandah of a house, and dragged him some distance. The man died in a few days, for the wounds inflicted by these animals are very deadly, owing to poison from the putrid matter adhering to the claws and teeth.

The tiger is said to become tame and docile in captivity: not so the panther, whose ferocious instincts apparently never leave him. I kept a young panther for some time, and he was a most amusing pet. He was very friendly with my fox-terrier, and the two used to indulge in great gambols, chasing each other round the bungalow. It was most interesting to watch the panther stalking the dog, dragging itself along on its belly, compressed into as small space as possible, and taking advantage of all the cover that lay in its way. He was tame and amiable until I began to feed him with rats and birds, when he became rather ferocious; and one day, after a course of this diet, he suddenly seized my hand and bit and clawed it so badly, that in a moment of anger I took the poor little beast by the throat and throttled it to death.

I have seen young tiger cubs, on several occasions, which have become quite tame, and were even fond of their owners, but have never heard of panthers being so docile.

I made my first acquaintance with tigers in the Ellichpur district, when out shooting with the forest officer. My companion had tied up a buffalo in the bed of a nullah not far from our camping-ground, and this was killed by a tigress. A screen of bushes was constructed on the bank above, where my friend

took up his position in the evening, and shot the tigress in the shoulder with a bullet from a ·577 express rifle when she came to renew her feast. He said that the beast fell over on being hit, but got up again and scrambled up the bank into the thick bushes, where it was too dark to follow her up that day.

Next morning we started to look for the tigress, taking with us a small pad elephant that belonged to the Government, but was of little use for this kind of work. Following on foot the track of blood left by the wounded animal, we soon came to a place under a tree where she seemed to have lain all night, for the ground and stones were smeared with blood; large pieces of bark had been gnawed off the tree, and a bit of broken bone which had worked out of the wound lay in a pool of blood. The jungle was here very thick, and things were beginning to look dangerous, so we got into trees, and the elephant was sent to make a detour, whilst the men on her back threw stones into the bushes to bring the tigress out. And out she came with a vengeance, charging with an awful roar or succession of roars, and, springing on to the elephant's head, attempted to strike out at the mahout; but having one fore-leg broken at the shoulder she could do no damage, and fell off again.

The elephant bolted, trumpeting loudly; the tigress followed with fierce coughing roars, and her long yellow form seemed to cut the grass as she sprang on to the retreating elephant's hind-quarters. A vigorous kick from the latter sent the tigress sprawling, and my companion then put in a good

shot, which made the beast slink back into a small nullah.

In the meantime the elephant bolted, and did not stop until it got back to our camp. One of the men now shouted that he could see the tigress lying in the nullah, gasping; so I got down from my tree, and, going to the place, finished her off with another shot.

She was not a very large animal, but she was a gallant beast, and had fought well to the end. The poor creature must have been rendered fierce by the painful wound inflicted on her the day before. The bullet by which she was hit was an ordinary express bullet, not having sufficient solid base to penetrate to the vitals. It had splintered the bone of the shoulder, but had there stopped, where a more solid missile would have passed right through the tigress's body and dropped her dead on the spot. In the Satpura range, to the north of Ellichpur, lies a vast tract of forest region called the Melghat, bounded on the north by the Tapti River. I have already spoken of these hills as abounding in all kinds of game, and, to give an idea of the kind of sport to be obtained there, where the above-described adventure with a tigress took place, I cannot do better than give an account of an expedition undertaken by me in the year 1891. This was one of several short expeditions to the Melghat, to which I always resorted when leave could be obtained. In those days the officers of the Ellichpur garrison had the right of shooting in these forests, but sportsmen from outside were obliged to obtain permission from the civil authorities.

It was a blazing hot day on 15th May when I started at mid-day, rode out twenty-seven miles, and reached my first camping-ground at Sembadoh late in the afternoon. Nothing relieved the monotony of the first fifteen miles of the dusty road, which was so hard that my horse's hoofs clattered on it as on a pavement. But after that we entered the forest, where my men met me, and I shot a khakur and two pea-fowl before arriving in camp.

We kept a sharp lookout for a tiger which had haunted this road for a long time, but saw nothing of him. He was too cunning to be circumvented by sportsmen, though bold in his undertakings; for he had a habit of lying hidden by the roadside, and springing on to the draught bullocks that passed in carts.

On the following morning a march of ten miles brought me to a wide, deep valley surrounded by hills, on whose wood-covered slopes and grassy plateaux I hoped to find the bison which were the objects of my expedition. In the afternoon I made an extensive circuit round the edge of the cultivation surrounding the adjacent village of Raipur, but shot only a four-horned antelope, and fired at, but missed, a hyena near the forest bungalow, where he had been regaling himself on the carcase of a cow.

After halting a day here, and meeting with no more game, I determined to move my camp on another ten miles, and left an hour before daybreak.

I generally go on foot, but this morning, unfortunately as it turned out, rode my pony. We had not gone very far before there was a rustling in the

jungle by the side of the path, and a bear rushed out straight at us. My pony reared up on his hind-legs, and I slid off and seized my rifle from the shikari who was carrying it; but, before I could get a shot, the bear turned back with a defiant growl when about five paces from us, and retreated into the shades of the forest. There were four or five men with me, and perhaps the large party terrified the animal and caused him to turn. Had he charged home, some of the party would doubtless have fared badly, for it would have been difficult to use a rifle in such a *melée* before daybreak. These sloth-bears frequently show a certain crustiness of temper when roused.

The year before this, while wandering early one morning on the bamboo-clad slope of a high plateau, I saw something black moving about in the long grass, and soon made out that it was a sloth-bear. A shot elicited a howl, and the bear came straight towards me at a heavy gallop. Stepping aside I shot her through the body as she went by, and she plunged headlong downhill, and fell dead with a crash into a clump of bamboos. Immediately after her a cub came capering along, and scratched a native down the leg as he tried to clamber to a place of safety. I then shot the little beast before it could do further mischief, for it was too large to capture, and would probably have perished miserably if permitted to escape.

On another occasion, some years later, a bear was marked down for me by the troopers of the 3rd Lancers, Hyderabad Contingent, near Hingoli, and driven from her lair at mid-day. Seeing me waiting

for her at the top of the hill, the bear charged at once with a fierce growl, and I dropped her dead a few feet off with a bullet in the head.

After this digression I must return to my expedition in the Melghat forest. On the morning when we met the bear we wandered over a large extent of country in hopes of finding bison, of which there were marks in many places; but no game was sighted. We put up a rare little animal of a species I had not previously met with, a lesser civet cat, recognised on reference to a natural-history book. At about ten o'clock we emerged on to a forest road about two or three miles from my new camping-ground, and here met my carts and camp equipage. I had mounted my pony, not expecting to meet with any game; the carts had gone on a little way ahead, and the goats were walking with us, when one of the men pointed out a panther sitting under a tree about eighty yards off. In a moment I was off my pony, and shot the animal through the head before he had time to move. He was a very small although an old panther, with a good skin. One of the carts was stopped, and the dead animal was placed upon it and carried to the village of Hatru, where my camp was pitched.

That night my servants roused me up and said that a bear, which they described to be "as big as a buffalo," had come down to drink at a trough of water by the well. It was bright moonlight, so I caught up my rifle, always ready for an emergency like this, and ran out to try and get a shot, but was only in time to hear the bear shuffling away over the dead leaves in a shady nullah.

During the next two days I wandered all over a valley watered by a river, whose stream was now shrunk to a tiny thread flowing over a stony bed. This place looked a very paradise for game. A great many trees were barked where the sambhur stags had rubbed the velvet from their horns, and deep cool ravines and thick bushes afforded ample cover. One day I missed a khakur, and shot a fine peacock with my rook rifle, and also saw a wild dog. The second day we found no game, but met with a large pack of at least twenty wild dogs, which led me to the conclusion that they had driven all other animals out of the country. In the evening we put up a couple of barking deer and a sounder of pig, but luck was against me, and I did not get a shot.

On the morning of 21st May I started before daybreak along the forest road, intending to turn off into the hills about four miles from camp, where we had previously seen marks of bison. It was just getting light, when I descried a bison close to the roadside, cropping the young grass which was springing from the burnt track of the fire-line. On my approach the animal turned to face me, and I walked up to within a distance of twenty yards and shot it in the chest. The creature presented a very ferocious appearance, which was, however, belied by its actions, for it turned to my shot, and dropped dead with another bullet behind the shoulder. Having seen only one, I thought this was a solitary bull, but at my second shot a herd of about six or eight animals broke from the jungle on my left and thundered past. I had just time to slip in a

cartridge and knock over a young bull before the herd disappeared, and then discovered that the first one killed was an old cow. The cows are not easily distinguished from the bulls by a novice, and it was quite dusk on this occasion. When one knows the animals better, the colour and form of a bull are sufficiently distinct to enable him to be picked out of a herd. The cows and young bulls are of a deep chestnut colour, whilst the older bulls are dark brown, and very old ones jet black. All alike have white stockings reaching above the knee.

The following morning we proceeded in the same direction and turned off into the forest, passing the place where the bisons' remains lay amid a loathsome heap of struggling vultures. We started two ratels, or honey-badgers, but two shots at them with my rook rifle failed to take effect. These appear to be rather uncommon animals, as I have met with them on only two occasions; but perhaps this is due to their nocturnal habits. Once a ratel came to a pool of water, over which I was sitting one moonlight night, and swam about for some time. With his grey back and black belly there was no mistaking him for any other animal.

After seeing the ratels we were working our way round towards camp, when we heard a great chattering of monkeys in the trees overhanging a deep ravine. Running to the place, I was just in time to meet a large bear coming up a narrow pathway. On receiving my shot he turned and bolted up the side of the hill, but I cut him off and hit him again. Still he would not show fight although very close to me, but turned back again, and fell dead to a

third shot. This was a very large and old bear, his canine teeth being worn down to stumps, whilst his coat was somewhat mangy, and beneath the skin were thick layers of fat. This is the only occasion on which I have known monkeys swear at anything except a feline foe, either tiger or panther; but the presence of either of these latter is sufficient to cause a great uproar among all the monkeys in the vicinity. In the evening, being in want of fresh meat, I went out and shot a four-horned antelope.

I had just sat down to dinner at seven o'clock, when my men came with the news that a panther was near the well; but he went off without giving me a shot. We then tied a goat up to attract the beast back; but the poor animal fell down the well during the night, and was found hanging dead by its rope in the morning. That night the bear revisited us; but I could not get within shot, and only saw him making off in the distance in the bright moonlight. Next day I put up a wild dog, and shot him through the stomach with a bullet from my rook rifle as he stood looking at me from a distance of about a hundred yards. He made off, but was followed up and finished with another shot; whilst a khakur was also killed a few yards farther on.

In the meantime a panther had slain one of my goats by the roadside about half a mile from camp, so I sat up over the remains in the evening, as the jungle was too extensive to beat. At about ten o'clock an eclipse of the moon came on quite unexpectedly, and as it became quite dark I went to sleep. However, my slumbers were too long and

profound, for, on examining the kill in the morning, it was discovered that the panther had made another meal of it whilst I was slumbering peacefully close by.

This sitting up for animals is poor sort of sport, and I have seldom indulged in it; for, apart from the many discomforts attending such a vigil, it does not seem to me to give the animal a fair chance. The discomforts are many. On one such occasion I was attacked by red ants, the most ferocious and venomous of their kind, and was compelled to retreat from the tree where I was sitting. Also in the thick jungle there are swarms of a most disagreeable kind of sticky fly, that delights in tormenting one; whilst the ever-present mosquitoes are always on the lookout for prey. Once, after settling myself on a tree to watch for a panther, I discovered a large swarm of bees on a branch just over my head. Fortunately, the panther did not put in an appearance; for the report of my rifle would doubtless have aroused an angry swarm, and I would have been obliged to take flight, which would have been exceedingly unpleasant if a wounded panther were rampaging in the vicinity.

During the two following days I went all over the surrounding country, but found no big game, and shot only a four-horned antelope; so on 26th May the camp was moved one stage on the return journey. Starting at daybreak, we followed a broad dry watercourse for eight or ten miles, seeing marks of bison in many places. Near a pool of water we found the remains of a cow bison, which had evidently been killed by a tiger. It had been

dead about a fortnight, and much of the dry skin was still adhering to the bones. The horns had disappeared, having probably been removed by porcupines, which are said to be partial to a keratose diet. Close by lay the wings and head of a large vulture. The hapless fowl must have ventured near while the tiger was on his prey, and had fallen a victim to his temerity. Bison seem to be not uncommonly killed by tigers. In 1890 I heard of a bull being killed in this way near Chikalda; whilst at Raipur, the village already mentioned in this narrative, the head of a very fine bull was shown to me, which, it was said, had been killed by a tiger after a desperate combat.

I believe the tiger that slew this bison was subsequently killed by an artillery officer belonging to the battery at Ellichpur. He was walking down a nullah in the early morning, accompanied by a Korku guide, when the latter pointed to a tiger sitting on the bank above. My friend had only a light single-barrelled ·450 express rifle, but he fired at the tiger, and hit it a second time as it made off. The beast then fell down into the nullah near him, and the sportsman, being so indifferently armed, wisely decided to leave it for some time. Later on he found the great beast dead. I have reason to believe that this was the bison bull's antagonist, because it was shot near the scene of the encounter, and it was injured about the head—very likely in its struggle with its mighty prey. I have on two other occasions found the remains of bison, which may have died a natural death, or have been killed by tigers, for no lesser beast could harm them.

During the remainder of this expedition, which lasted altogether twelve days, we met with no more big game; but a fair number of khakur and four-horned antelope were brought to bag. There was not very much small game near Ellichpur, with the exception of antelope and gazelle. Sometimes, however, very fair bags of sand-grouse were made. It is a peculiarity of these birds that they always go down to drink water at certain places at nine o'clock in the morning. I discovered several such places in the vicinity of the cantonment, and sometimes shot six or eight brace of birds in the course of half an hour.

There were no lakes in the neighbourhood of Ellichpur, with the exception of one at Darberi, about thirty miles off, so there was little wild-fowl shooting obtainable. I only visited Darberi once, with two companions, when we had very good sport, and made a large bag of duck. A great deal of damage is done to the small game by the Pardis, a wandering tribe, living almost entirely on the game they catch in snares and nets. They have a most skilful method of catching antelope in nooses, which they place all round a field in which a herd of these animals is grazing, and then drive them over the nooses, sometimes capturing three or four at once. These people, like most natives, are very cruel. I have known them bring for sale in the bazaar an antelope with a broken leg, which they had captured some days before, and kept alive for the market day. I have heard of Hindus lighting a fire under a bullock that was unable or unwilling to move, in order to make it rise. Yet these same Hindus look

upon cattle as sacred animals, and account it a sin to take life.

Nowhere is a law for the prevention of cruelty to animals more necessary than in India. The natives, for the most part, appear to think that animals have no feelings; at least so one would suppose from their treatment of them. I have seen not only bullocks, but camels and horses, suffering from dreadful sores, yet worked hard; and the natives of India will work their animals until they die.

Towards the end of 1891, having obtained a year's leave, I regretfully left the station of Ellichpur, and embarked for England on board the troopship *Crocodile*, arriving at Portsmouth on 1st December.

The voyage was a prosperous one, over calm seas; but our ship came to grief on arrival at Portsmouth, where the force of the tide was so great that it drove us into a railway bridge, causing the collapse of the structure; and the partial destruction of a train which was standing on it. Fortunately, the accident was unattended with any loss of life.

CHAPTER VIII

JOURNEY TO RUSSIA—MOSCOW

Return from Exile—Dead Sea Fruit—Voyage of the *Guadalquivir*—Marseilles—Stromboli—Scylla and Charybdis—Etna—The Gulf of Salamis—Quarantine—The Rock of Xerxes—The Acropolis—Quarantine Island—Fellow-passengers—Piræus—Collision with a Greek Vessel—Athens—Visit to the Acropolis—The Areopagus—Stormy Weather—Smyrna—The Dardanelles—The Sea of Marmora—The Golden Horn—Constantinople—The Mosque of St. Sophia—The Bazaar—Pera and Stamboul—The Hall of the Thousand and One Columns—The Bosphorus—The Black Sea—The Isle of Serpents—Odessa—Journey to Moscow—The White City—Life in a Russian Family—Winter in Moscow—The Kremlin—The Belfry of Ivan the Great—The Palace of Arms—The Great Bell—Theatres—Beggars—Skating—The Streets of Moscow—Country Life—The Sparrow Hills—Passports—Entry of Alexander III.—Police Precautions—Plot against the Tzar—Murder of a Nihilist—Student Revolutionists.

THE exile who passes the greater part of his life in foreign lands finds himself rather in want of occupation on returning to his native country. He has lost sight of most of his friends; the country, the climate, the surroundings and pursuits all differ from those to which he has become accustomed; and he seems sadly to realise that he is a wanderer on the face of the earth, who can find no rest amid the quiet scenes of his native land. He longs for adventure and excitement, not to be found among the peaceful homesteads of England. The rest to which he had been looking forward, when out there in that land of vain regrets, with straining eyes for ever turned towards

the West,—that rest is found irksome. His desires, in fulfilment, are like Dead Sea fruit: though fair without and to the view, they turn to ashes in the grasp. This feeling wears off in a short time; but at first, during my stay in England, I felt it strong upon me, and often longed to be back in the jungles of India where I had spent so many happy days.

Finding time hang heavy on my hands, and with a view to the accomplishment of something interesting and useful, I undertook the study of the Russian tongue, and, having passed a preliminary examination, received orders to proceed to Moscow in November 1892, to complete the course of study and acquire a thorough knowledge of the language. The direct route to Russia through Berlin and Warsaw is somewhat uninteresting, so I decided to proceed by way of Marseilles and Constantinople to Odessa, and thence by train to Moscow.

A fresh breeze was blowing in the Gulf of Lyons when the good ship *Guadalquivir*, of the French Messageries Maritimes Company, bound for Odessa, steamed out of Marseilles harbour on 17th November, taking a south-easterly course towards the Straits of Bonifacio. We were to have left port the previous day; but a steamer coming into the harbour having collided with our vessel in the dusk of a foggy evening, we were delayed twenty-four hours for some slight repairs. The Mediterranean can be rough at times,—indeed I have experienced such a gale in these seas as I have not met with in the broad Atlantic; but on this occasion the storms had passed away, although a considerable swell caused the ship to roll unpleasantly. There was but little of interest during the early part of the

voyage. We passed close to Stromboli, slumbering peacefully, although a smoky haze could be distinguished on its summit. Then we entered the Straits of Messina, steamed by Scylla and Charybdis, no longer dreadful to navigators as they were to the mariners of old, and caught a distant glimpse of snow-clad Etna, smoking like a furnace, and sending up dark clouds which told of the lava flood boiling inside the great volcano. A few days later our ship lay at anchor in the Gulf of Salamis, with the yellow flag flying at her masthead, for we had come from a cholera-infected port, and were doomed to five days' quarantine.

It had come on to blow hard, and the waves had risen mountains high as we approached the historic shores of Greece. We had experienced a rough sea off the coast, and with difficulty weathered Cape Matapan in a storm, so it was pleasant to be at anchor in the calm gulf, where no breath of air broke the wave, and the November sun shone from a clear blue sky on bluer waters.

Close by us towered the rock where, in ancient days, Xerxes is said to have sat, and rent his robes when he saw the destruction of his fleet in the gulf below. The name of almost every hill and every valley of the surrounding coast breathes of the mighty past, and the great ruins of the Acropolis stand out there on the hill near Athens, and bear witness to the futility of all human works—

> "Fragments of stone reared by creatures of clay,
> Remnants of things that have passèd away."

Here, in imagination, one cannot but look back two thousand years, and people those ruins with the mighty dead, the remains of whose works are to be

seen on every side, forming a fitting monument to perished greatness.

In the evening I watched the sun go down in a flood of golden light behind the distant snow-clad heights of the Peloponnesus, and the reflected light crowned the marble columns of Jupiter Olympus on the Acropolis with glory, like a remembrance of the Past.

Numerous fishing-boats with dark red sails dotted the bay, and the peculiar action of the rowers was noticeable; they rose to their feet with each stroke of the oar, even as they used to do in the days of ancient Greece.

Life on board ship in quarantine was somewhat monotonous. We could land only on the small quarantine island, where a few solitary graves marked the last resting-place of some unfortunate travellers, including one hapless lady who had died on board our ship. But there was not much pleasure in wandering on the barren shore, and the indifferent wine of the lonely little *cabaret* was not inviting. A daily swim in the gulf, where the Persian fleet was destroyed, was a much pleasanter amusement; for, although it was late in November, the sea was sufficiently warm to render bathing enjoyable.

The officers of the ship were excellent fellows, and many of the passengers were entertaining; they included Russians, Turks, Armenians, Greeks, and Bulgarians; and an old French gentleman, who had travelled much in many parts of the world, was an especially amusing companion. He used to remark that, go where he might, even to the uttermost ends of the earth, he always found Englishmen. "*Les*

Anglais sont comme le bon Dieu; ils sont partout," he used to say; a very sage and true observation.

At length we obtained permission to enter Piræus harbour; the yellow flag was hauled down amidst the cheers of passengers and crew, and our ship steamed slowly to her anchorage. Here, however, a difficulty occurred. Sufficient room was not allowed for our vessel, and she swung round on her anchor and collided with a Greek man-of-war. The collision was repeated several times before the ship was made fast, and excited the wrath of the Greek captain, who shouted out in French: "When the Turks become Christians the French will be sailors"; but I think the remark might with equal truth have been applied to the Greeks, for there seemed to be an entire want of discipline and order on their ship, and great confusion prevailed on board of her during the accident. Fortunately, no serious damage was done to either vessel, principally owing to the exertions of the Frenchmen, who busied themselves in placing rope-fenders between the ships each time they swung together. After a time our steamer was brought-to and anchored fore and aft.

From Piræus a party of us went by rail to Athens, and visited the ruins of the Acropolis. Sad it was to see the beautiful marble columns, once the supports of the most splendid building in the world, lying about in fragments on the hill-top; a few columns indeed still stood, but it was a desolate scene. The Acropolis looks like the mausoleum of a nation's greatness. There is here a museum containing such relics as have not been removed by British and other foreign vandals, but many of the

statues are incomplete. It is a wonderful place to behold, this ruin of temples and palaces and theatres, surrounded by a fitting landscape of mountain and sea, pregnant with great memories, over which for ever broods the phantom of the Past. Having admired the incomparable and faultless Parthenon, we crossed to Mars Hill, the Areopagus of the Greeks, which stands close by. It is famous for having been the place where the Court held its sittings in ancient days, and also as the spot where the Apostle Paul preached the gospel of Christianity. Then we returned to modern Athens, a rather squalid and uninteresting town, which brought us back at once from the Past to the insignificant and inglorious Present.

That afternoon we proceeded on our voyage, but the weather was so rough out at sea that the captain wisely decided not to attempt to double Cape Colonna, and we sought refuge from the storm in a sheltering harbour where a number of other steamers in similar plight had also cast anchor. Here we passed the night; and in the morning, the sea having become calmer, proceeded on our way to Smyrna, threading the maze of the Cyclades in somewhat stormy weather. Smyrna is principally remarkable for its extensive land-locked harbour, one of the finest in the world. It is quite an Eastern town, for within all is Asiatic, although a sailors' home and a few European shops on the sea-front give it a more civilised appearance.

There is a striking view obtainable from the top of a hill beyond the town, whereon stands a ruined fort. The landscape is not very pleasing, but the

groves of olives, cypresses, and vines are inviting to look at, and the eternal sea beyond is ever attractive. The streets of Smyrna are narrow and dirty. I visited a restaurant, where a good cup of coffee and a *narghile* were obtainable, and then returned on board ship, not finding much of interest in the town. Fortunately, my passport had been *viséd* by the Turkish consul in London, for the authorities here demanded to see it, although it was not required at Constantinople or elsewhere until my arrival on Russian soil.

After remaining a day at Smyrna we voyaged eastwards, sheltered from stormy weather by the islands of Mitylene and Lemnos, and steamed up the Dardanelles in the early morning. We passed the dreary sandbanks and threatening batteries bristling with guns, whose position to bring a cross-fire seemed to render the Straits impassable to any hostile fleet. We steamed by Sestos and Abydos, where Leander and Lord Byron swam the Hellespont, and Xerxes and Alexander crossed with their armies. Then we passed out into the calm waters of the Sea of Marmora, where the island of the same name, bleak and bare and rocky, lifted its snow-capped head above the surf, whilst on both sides of us stretched the sandy shores of two continents.

Night had already fallen when we anchored outside the Golden Horn. The authorities would not allow our vessel to enter the harbour after dark, and we had to undergo inspection by the quarantine officials. Next morning, when we entered the harbour, Constantinople appeared to rise like an enchanted city from the golden mist. Its thousand

minarets pierced the blue sky; its gilded and coloured domes and cupolas flashed in the rays of the rising sun, and the buildings looked singularly white, as though built of Parian stone—the whole forming a scene wonderful to behold. However, on landing we are quickly disenchanted. Surely no uncleaner city than this of Stamboul exists on the face of the earth. The streets reek with filth, amidst which innumerable outcast dogs fight for offal, and move unwillingly from the way of the passer-by. We first directed our steps to the beautiful mosque of St. Sophia. Before entering the heavily-curtained door we were provided by an attendant with a pair of Turkish slippers, which have to be put on by the visitor; for this is holy ground, and must not be defiled by the foot of the infidel.

What pen can describe the wonders of the mosque of St. Sophia? Without, on three sides it is surrounded by great closed porticos; and within it presents a beautiful perspective, being in the form of an elongated oval framed by two colonnades. The lower rows of columns support an upper gallery, which surrounds the whole interior wall of the building, with the exception of the chancel. Such galleries are usually found in Byzantine churches, being appointed for the women, who, in the Greek form of worship, are separated from the men during the service. Over the centre of the building is a broad cupola, which, having numerous bays at its base, appears remarkably light. For harmony of parts and simplicity and beauty of style, the St. Sophia mosque is perhaps even now the first building in

the world; and the church of St. Peter's in Rome is far inferior to it in these respects. One can easily imagine what a deep impression this ancient temple produced, with its interior decorations, its different-coloured marbles, and the elaborate mosaics with which the walls were covered. Well might Justinian, the builder of the church, exclaim on the day of its consecration: "I have surpassed thee, O Solomon! Glory to God, who has honoured me by permitting me to complete this work!" Since the time of the Mussulman invasion the interior decorations have been concealed by a thick layer of stucco, and the outside of the building has been disfigured by various structures.

Leaving the great mosque we proceeded to the bazaar, a most interesting part of the town, where beautiful fabrics from Persia, and manufactures of European and Asiatic Turkey, are exposed for sale. We crossed the bridge from Pera to Stamboul, amid a crowd of Turks; then we entered a Turkish restaurant, where we drank coffee from Mocha, smoked a *narghile*, and tasted with appreciation the wine of the country. Afterwards we proceeded to a great underground vault called the Hall of the Thousand and One Columns, which was entered by descending a narrow flight of steps in the middle of one of the streets. This was a vast and gloomy vault, the roof supported by many columns; and here the attendant told us a curious tale, which reads rather like a page from the *Arabian Nights*.

In a house over this vault there once lived a woman, who was in the habit of attracting rich men to visit her. She would then confine them in the

vault, and force them, under pain of death, to sign orders for large sums of money to be delivered to her. When she had extracted all she could from them, her unfortunate victims were murdered by her attendants. This continued for several years, during which period many rich merchants of the city unaccountably disappeared. One day one of the intended victims made his escape, and the matter having been reported to the police, the woman paid the just penalty of her crimes. All this, we were assured, occurred within the present century, and, as far as I can recollect the story, during the latter half of it.

After remaining a few days at Constantinople to discharge and take in cargo, our vessel steamed down the Bosphorus, by fragrant gardens and pleasant groves, past the Sultan's palace and the rocks of the Symplegades, and out into the dark waters of the Black Sea. A strong breeze was blowing from the east, thick clouds obscured the sky, and a storm, such as are very frequent in these seas at this season of the year, seemed to be brooding over the inhospitable waves of the Euxine. However, although the sea looked black enough to merit its name, the storm did not break, and after an uneventful voyage of three days, during which the only land seen was the Isle of Serpents, at the estuaries of the Danube, we reached the harbour of Odessa, and were glad to find that the sea was not yet frozen over, as it frequently is in the early days of December. It was a great change to pass from the summer seas of Southern Turkey to the wintry climate of Russia, for here the masts of the ships lying at anchor were encrusted with frozen snow;

and we were glad to wrap our furs around us, to ward off the biting wind now blowing from the north. A great contrast also did Odessa present to the last city we had visited. Here were the fine buildings and well-laid-out gardens of a civilised European town. Altogether, with its broad streets and extensive wharves, Odessa appeared to be one of the best-built towns I have seen.

Here some delay occurred on landing; for various formalities had to be gone through before passports were stamped and travellers permitted to disembark. My voyage by sea, which had been a very pleasant and interesting one, had now come to an end. Next day I left by train for Moscow, whilst the *Guadalquivir* proceeded on her way to Batoum. The line of rail to Moscow runs through a flat country, generally uninteresting, and especially so in winter when the surface of the land is entirely hidden by the snow. Arriving in Moscow in the depth of winter, after my voyage along the warm Mediterranean coast, I seemed at once to enter a new world. At first sight the great white city, with its numerous and fantastic cupolas of Oriental architecture, presents quite an Eastern appearance. All was covered with snow except the lofty spires and the cupolas of green and blue and gold, which stood out clearly defined against the frosty sky. In the narrow streets the people slouched lazily along, wrapped in furs, with the collars of their coats turned up so high as to almost conceal their faces, and the numerous sledges with tinkling bells added to the strangeness of the scene.

On arriving in Moscow I was for the first three

months domiciled in a Russian family, but left it after that period, partly because the food was not much to my taste, but more because the people spoke English, an impediment to my progress in acquiring the Russian language. Whilst I lived in this family the daily routine was very monotonous. I rose at nine in the morning, when a very light breakfast was served, including coffee which I have not found equalled anywhere; at one o'clock we had lunch, a more substantial though sometimes less inviting meal; at six o'clock, dinner consisting of three courses; and after each meal the inevitable *samovar*, or hot-water urn, was produced, and we drank tea flavoured with lemon and sugar. In between whiles I worked at the language, assisted by the lady of the house and her daughter; and in the afternoon I usually went to skate or for a walk. In the evening the kind lady of the house and I sat together and smoked cigarettes of wonderful flavour, and sometimes I visited a theatre of varieties or other place of entertainment.

If the traveller arrives in winter, the first thing he has to do is to provide himself with a fur coat and cap, for without the necessary garments it would be impossible to stand the rigours of the climate. Wrapped in furs and with indiarubber goloshes over one's boots, one may leave the warm house and defy the cold outside, even though the thermometer may register thirty degrees Réaumur. When there are over twenty degrees of frost, wood fires are kept burning in all the squares and principal streets, rendering it possible to stop at intervals and warm oneself. The houses are well heated by

means of hot air from the stoves, or by hot-water pipes; all the windows are double, and in winter the interstices are filled with putty, so that the rooms are almost hermetically sealed. This naturally makes the air in Russian houses exceedingly close, so I used to open the ventilator in my bedroom window for a few minutes every morning to let in fresh air, to the great horror and alarm of my landlady.

In Moscow the Kremlin is the most notable object, and first attracts the attention of the visitor, both from its historical associations as the cradle of the Russian Empire, and from its external aspect. Within its historic walls are many interesting buildings, palaces, and churches, and it contains many memorials of ancient Russia and of the Moscow Tzars and Grand Dukes. The Kremlin is surrounded by a high turreted wall, and has five gates surmounted by towers. From the farther bank of the Moskva River it presents a fine appearance, with its gilded, blue, and green cupolas. Of its contents the most interesting are the Great Palace, the Palace of Arms, the Uspenski Cathedral, founded in 1326, where the Tzars are crowned; the Great Bell, and a large collection of cannons, most of them abandoned by the French army during their disastrous retreat in 1812. The belfry of Ivan the Great, standing near the Cathedral, has a chime of thirty bells, and from its summit a fine view of the city and of the surrounding country can be obtained. In the Palace of Arms is a collection of old weapons, Imperial regalia, coins, medals, and other interesting relics, including a pair of boots made by Peter the Great.

The Great Bell of Moscow is the largest in the world. It stands on a granite base near the belfry of Ivan the Great. A large piece, which has been broken out of its side, stands close by. On the bell itself is inscribed the following history:—

(1) "To the blessed and ever worthy memories of the great Tzar and the Grand Duke Alexis Michaelovich, by order of the Autocrat of Great, Little, and White Russia, to the Cathedral of the Assumption of the Mother of God, the Great Bell of 8000 *poods* weight (about 288,000 lbs.) was cast in the year 7162 from the creation of the world and 1654 from the birth of Christ; and in this place began to ring in the year 7176 from the creation and 1660 from the birth of Christ; and on the 19th day of June in the year 7208 from the creation and 1701 from the birth of Christ it was injured by a great conflagration in the Kremlin; since the year 1731 from the birth of Christ it has been silent.

(2) "By order of the Empress Anna Ivanovna, Autocrat of all the Russias, in honour of the great God and of the sacred Mother of God in the Church of the Assumption, this bell was cast out of the former bell of 8000 *poods*, with an addition of 2000 *poods*, in the year 7241 from the creation and 1733 from the birth of Christ, and the fourth year of the blessed reign of Her Imperial Majesty.

(3) "The Russian bell-founder Ivan Fedoroff, son of Motorin, with his son Michael Motorin, cast this bell."

There are innumerable churches and monasteries in Moscow, many of which contain great wealth in jewels and money, which would be far better expended in relieving the wretched peasants.

There are two Imperial theatres in Moscow; the larger of the two, where I frequently went to the opera, is the third theatre in the world in point of size. There are also several private theatres, and some places of amusement after the fashion of our music halls. These are dreadful sinks of iniquity, where a premium is placed on vice; they are kept open till four o'clock in the morning. These theatres have choruses of women, who sing occasionally, but promenade among the audience during the greater part of the time when the entertainment is in progress. Some of them receive a miserable pittance of thirty shillings a month; others receive no pay at all, but have to sing in the chorus for the privilege of being allowed to frequent the theatre. These lost souls form the principal attraction by which the managers of the halls make their fortunes. The most curious building in the city is the church of Vassili Blajennei, which stands in the Red Square near the Kremlin. It is of all colours, and the architecture is of a most fantastic description. It is said to have been built by an Italian architect by order of the Tzar Ivan the Terrible, who caused the unfortunate man's eyes to be put out after the completion of the building, so that he should not construct another one like it. Close by stands a fine group of statues in memory of Minin and Pojarski, who delivered Russia from the Polish invasion in 1613.

One of the features of Moscow is the great number of beggars to be seen everywhere. They stand in lines along the streets, soliciting alms—wretched creatures of all ages and both sexes, many of them dreadfully maimed or deformed; but there is also

a fair sprinkling of able-bodied mendicants. Some of these beggars soon became well known to me by sight. There was one man with no legs, who generally became intoxicated on holidays, and on such occasions I have seen the wretched creature lying in the gutter with his crutches beside him.

The winter is the pleasantest time in Moscow, as there are then more amusements to be found in the town, and the climate, although so cold, is preferable to the great heat of summer.

There are several skating places, and as it freezes hard for about four months in the year there is plenty of exercise to be obtained; but it is too cold for skating when the thermometer falls below twenty degrees Réaumur. Sometimes I went to skate and found the place deserted, for apparently the Russians were unable to stand the cold. No doubt one of the reasons for this is the way in which they shut themselves up all the winter in rooms that are almost hermetically sealed. The inhabitants are, generally speaking, lazy and effeminate. In winter they seldom walk, and, when they do so, do not move with any briskness, but crawl along muffled up in furs.

The streets of Moscow are in almost every respect the most unpleasant streets in the world. The pavements are so narrow as to render it impossible to walk with any comfort, and the roads are paved with cobble stones, so that the incessant rumbling of vehicles is absolutely deafening; but of course in winter this latter disadvantage is not evident, as the streets are covered with snow, and one drives in sledges, when the only noise is the musical tinkling

of the bells. When the winter frost breaks up, the streets are in a horrible mess from the melted snow; and all the foul smells, frozen up during the cold season, are [illegible]ose. In spring and summer repairs are going [illegible]ywhere; there is a smell of asphalte in almost [illegible]treet; the houses are being painted, and the p[illegible]ats are obstructed in many places with scaffo[illegible]nd ladders. In summer the heat is great, and the d[illegible]disagreeable; the theatres in the town are c[illegible]. Everyone who can afford to do so goes out to [illegible]e country. There are many places round M[illegible] within easy reach by train or tramcar, where one can pass the summer very pleasantly living in a *dacha*, as the small country houses are called. These *dachas* are built of wood, and in the hot weather are delightful habitations, situated as they are in the midst of woods and gardens. Some of them, as Tzaritzino and Petrovski Razumovski, are quiet and retired; others, like the Petrovski Park, are full of life, and have theatres of varieties and other places of entertainment.

One of the pleasantest spots in the vicinity of the city is on the top of the Sparrow Hills, about four or five miles off, above the bank of the river. From these heights a splendid view of the town can be obtained; whilst they are historically interesting from the fact that Napoleon stood here in 1812, when he first set eyes on Moscow with its thousand spires. It is pleasant to climb these hills on a fine summer's day and drink tea in one of the many little gardens, returning by boat on the winding river.

From the spot where Napoleon stood, now occu-

pied by a restaurant, the whole panorama of Moscow lies at one's feet. In the foreground are stretches of green meadows and deep woods, beyond which the great Church of the Saviour obtrudes itself upon the view. Conspicuous also are the Foundling Hospital and the turreted walls of the Kremlin. The whole is held in a curve of the Moskva River.

The necessity for having a passport and showing it wherever one goes is rather irksome in Russia, as indeed is the passport system altogether. With every change of address the passport has to be sent to the local police-officer for registration; and not only is this document necessary to enable one to enter Russia, but another has to be procured after six months' residence in the country, and yet another before one can recross the frontier. It is not foreigners alone who require passports, but every inhabitant of the country is obliged to have one, and renew it periodically, when a small fee is charged, which must be a considerable source of revenue. When I was in Moscow reports were rife that reforms were to be made in the passport system, which is vexatious to all and useful to none; for it is said that it not only does not assist the police, but increases their difficulties, owing to the traffic in these documents.

In 1893 the Tzar made a State entry into Moscow, to lay the foundation of a statue in the Kremlin to the memory of his father, Alexander II. Elaborate precautions for his safety were taken by the police, and the time of his arrival was made known only twenty-four hours beforehand. Troops lined the streets from the railway station to the Kremlin, and crowds stood for some hours waiting his arrival.

He drove rapidly by in an open carriage and pair, accompanied by the Empress, and greeted by cheers from the troops and crowd. He was a tall, stalwart man, in appearance much like the ordinary Russian peasant. He was gifted with great physical strength, and was said to be the strongest man in Russia. On the evening of his arrival there were great illuminations, and the streets were paraded by a vast but orderly crowd. It was said that the Tzar would remain a fortnight in Moscow, but he went away quite unexpectedly after staying only a few days. No doubt, such secret movements were rendered necessary by political requirements, as the Nihilists were said to be still at work. Few Russian Tzars have died a natural death.

I heard, but I cannot vouch for the truth of the story, that there was a plot to blow up the Imperial train on the way to Moscow in 1893, and that three students were appointed to perpetrate the deed. Two of them, suspecting or discovering that the third intended to betray them, killed him and cut off his head, which they carried away in order to conceal his identity. They, however, neglected to search his pockets, in which, among other papers, was found a list of conspirators; so the plot was discovered. The story certainly bears an air of improbability, but it was talked of much in the city, and I heard it from several sources.

It is, of course, almost impossible to learn the whole truth about anything in Russia, owing to the censorship of the press and the fear of spies. The Nihilists are for the greater part said to be among the students, nearly all of whom hold advanced

liberal and socialistic views. Many of these students, however, are very shallow revolutionists. They talk a great deal of the burden of an oppressive government, denounce autocracy and plutocracy, and propagate revolutionary ideas, but do this only because they consider it the correct thing; for they will throw up their caps and shout with the loudest on such an occasion as the entry of the Tzar into the capital.

CHAPTER IX

WHITE RUSSIA—RUSSIAN LITERATURE

Visit to White Russia—Borodino—Smolensk—Journey in a Sleigh—A Russian Country House—Bieshenkovichy—The Grand Army—Ostrovno—A Centenarian—The Coming of Napoleon—A Russian Estate—The River Dvina—A Drive to the Forest—A Forest Hut—Hunt for Bears—Freedom in Russia—The Jews in Russia—Return to Moscow—The Russian Language—Russian Fictional Literature—Pessimism in Literature—The Press Censor—Characteristics of Russian Fiction—Translations—Dostoevski—Tolstoi—Poushkin the Poet—Lermontoff, his Life and Tragic Death—Turgenev—Gogol—His Description of the Dnieper—Korolenko—The Censorship of the Press—Suppression of Newspapers—Persecution of Turgenev—Effects of the Censorship.

EARLY in February 1893 a Russian gentleman, a retired naval officer, whom I had met in the train on my way from Odessa, was so kind as to invite me to pay a visit to his country residence, situated on the bank of the River Dvina, in the Vitebsk government. That part of the Tzar's dominions which lies beyond Smolensk, and borders on the southern confines of the Baltic provinces, is called White Russia,—why, I know not. White enough it certainly was with its dreary expanse of plain, clad in a winter garb of snow; but equally white, and if anything more dreary, were the steppes of Little Russia and Great Russia, through which I had travelled a short time previously. Passing through the splendid triumphal gates of Moscow,

surmounted by a classic group representing Victory drawing a chariot and eight horses, and built to commemorate the retreat of the French in 1812, I left the city by train from the Smolensk station, accompanied by my friend.

We travelled comfortably, for the carriages on the Russian railways are warm and luxurious in winter. Not far from Moscow we passed near the famous field of Borodino, where the Russians made a last stand against the French in 1812, before abandoning the white capital to the invaders. Passing Smolensk, where we only stopped long enough to obtain a glimpse of the grey turreted walls and numerous cupolas, picturesquely situated on heights overlooking the River Dneiper, we arrived towards evening at a small station, where my friend's sledge awaited us.

The moon rose at dusk, and the long drive of thirty miles was not unpleasant, although it was very cold in the open sledge, and the snow lay thick on the ground. Wrapped in furs from head to foot, with a wolfskin rug drawn over our feet, we did not feel the frost; and the three horses, harnessed tandem-wise, took us swiftly along to the merry tinkling of the bells. Other vehicles had already marked the road, so we got along without difficulty, passing over an endless expanse of snow, relieved occasionally by dark, gloomy pine forests or groves of birch-trees, that spread their white branches in spectral and fantastic array in the bright moonlight. We drove across the River Dvina, now frost-bound, and the sledge stopped before the door of my kind friend's hospitable mansion, which looked gloomy

enough, for it was inhabited in summer only, and my host had merely come for a short stay to make his usual winter inspection of his property. The gloom, however, soon disappeared when we entered and found ourselves in a well-lit hall, where the winter air was shut out, and we were welcomed by the cheery overseer of the estate. Nothing can exceed the kindness and hospitality of the typical Russian country gentleman. In the early part of the century an ancestor of my host's had been an *Anglomaniac*, as those are termed who have prejudices in favour of everything English: he had rebuilt the house, and furnished it somewhat in the English style. The rooms were large and airy. An excellent bathroom, an unusual luxury in a Russian house, was a great comfort; and the library was well stocked with English books, as well as with works in other languages. My host spoke English perfectly, which was well for me, as I had then only acquired a smattering of the Russian tongue.

The house and its surroundings, by name Bieshenkovichy, were of historic interest. Napoleon's Grand Army had passed close by in July 1812, on its way to accomplish the destinies of Russia; and the mighty conqueror himself had made this mansion his headquarters, whence he had crossed the River Dvina by a hastily-constructed bridge, and had carried out a reconnaissance of the Russian position near Vitebsk.

In the vicinity was the village of Ostrovno, where the Emperor's advanced guard under Murat fought a stubborn action with the fourth Russian army corps under Ostermann, and forced the latter

to retreat. There lived on the premises when I was at Bieshenkovichy a decrepit old servant, over a hundred years of age, who well remembered the coming of the French, and related how Napoleon had entertained a number of his generals at dinner on the evening of his arrival at the house.

The room where the great man slept was pointed out to me; and from the windows could be seen the path where he had paced up and down, building those castles in the air which were so soon to crumble away, and, in their fall, to shake the foundations of his power.

The day after our arrival my host took me round part of his estate, consisting mostly of cattle farms and cultivation. There was also a distillery, with the refuse of which the cattle were fed in the sheds, where they were shut up close and warm for the winter. In charge of one of the farms was an old non-commissioned officer of the Horse Artillery of the Guard, who related some of his experiences before Plevna.

The estate was a very large one, stretching for many leagues, and including several extensive forests, whilst some portions of the property were detached at a great distance.

The house was built on high ground sloping down to the river bank, and the view must have been very beautiful in summer, when the stream could be seen through the avenue of trees, flowing between high banks, and occasionally disturbed by a passing steamer, for there was considerable traffic between Vitebsk and Riga.

Now all was bleak and bare. The lawn was

covered by a spotless sheet of snow; the river was frozen over; and the trees, festooned with snow and icicles, were destitute of leaves.

After remaining two days in the mansion, I started off on a fifty-mile drive to a distant part of my friend's property, where there was a great extent of forest, and a few bears were reported to be located. The drive was somewhat monotonous, for the road was bad, and we did not get along very quickly, whilst more than once some delay was caused by our being upset into deep snow by the roadside. There was the usual dreary expanse of snow, alternating with occasional forests, and we passed through several villages, where I and my companion (a retired overseer), who had been a great hunter in his day, warmed ourselves with the *vodka* of the country—a rather raw spirit compared with the delicate liqueur obtainable in more civilised places. Having halted half-way for more solid refreshment, we arrived towards nightfall at the forester's hut, situated on the edge of the forest, which was to be our habitation during the shooting expedition. The hut was small, but warm and cosy, and we made ourselves very comfortable in it during our two days' stay there, although some hens occupied the same room, and a cock crew at morn from the foot of my bed. The bears we had come in search of were supposed to have been marked down in the autumn, when they retired to hibernate deep in the solitude of the wood.

Next day, beaters were collected, and we beat a considerable extent of forest, but no bears could be found. Probably, the lairs had not been properly

marked; but in any case it would have been very difficult to find the animals, for the snow was nowhere less than waist-deep, and in places where it had drifted was six or eight feet in depth. On my way back to the hut I saw tracks of a lynx in the snow, but no animals of any kind were seen, and the forest seemed to be absolutely destitute of wild life.

Next day we drove back, and my good friend welcomed me as though I had been absent two years instead of two days. He was much disappointed that I had not succeeded in killing a bear, and, at the suggestion of the overseer, proposed that a tame one belonging to someone in the neighbourhood should be purchased for me to shoot. This idea, although so kindly intended, it is needless to say, was not carried out. The worthy overseer even proposed that I should shoot the animal from the dining-room window, so as to be in a position of perfect safety!

This was the pleasantest period of my sojourn in Russia. Although I remained only a week here in White Russia, a sense of freedom not to be found elsewhere was experienced.

Here my host was practically monarch of all he surveyed. There was no trouble with the police or other officials, as there is in less remote parts of the empire; and my passport was not demanded—a formality that has to be gone through in most places where the traveller remains for a night. Here one could cast off that depressing feeling of want of freedom which burdens the traveller on Russian territory—a feeling which the foreigner casts off



RUSSIAN TROIKA.

as a weight from his shoulders when he recrosses the frontier and leaves the line of Russian outposts behind him.

During my visit I inspected the adjacent village, consisting of not too clean wooden habitations. The inhabitants were for the most part Jews, but did not appear to have attained to that wealthy condition that their compatriots reach in other countries, for they seemed to be living in poverty-stricken squalor. This is one of the few provinces of the empire where the Jews are still permitted to remain, although it seemed to be the general opinion that they would eventually be expelled from here also. I think people are inclined to look on this expulsion of the Jews from Russia rather one-sidedly from the point of view of the oppressed Israelite race.

There is no doubt that these people do a great deal of harm by usury, for they ruin the Russian peasant wherever they come in contact with him. Trading on the peasant's love of *vodka*, they administer to his desire for drink at an immense profit to themselves: the peasant spends what little money he earns at the drinking-house, gets into debt, and finally pawns all his possessions down to his last shirt in order to obtain his beloved liquor.

Doubtless, unduly harsh treatment was used in carrying out the expulsion of the Jews, and I have heard stories of their being driven at the point of the bayonet to the trains that were to carry them across the frontier. But even this extreme measure was rendered necessary in some cases, for the people would not leave until they were turned out by force. Without in any way advocating the cause of tyranny

or the oppression of the weak, it may be urged that both sides of the question should be dispassionately considered. If the Jews have suffered much, they have also caused much suffering; and perhaps other countries would be equally glad to get rid of their Hebrews, but have not sufficient courage to undertake such a drastic measure.

It was with regret that I left my host's hospitable mansion and returned to Moscow. I saw no more of White Russia, except for a glimpse obtained from the railway carriage some months later, on my way to Warsaw and the frontier.

On returning to Moscow I settled down for some months to work at the language, and, in addition to acquiring a colloquial knowledge of it, made a study of the principal Russian fiction of the day, which certainly was more interesting than the works of most contemporary English novelists. A general impression prevails that the Russian language presents almost insuperable difficulties; but I doubt if it is more difficult than other European tongues, and a few months' sojourn in the country is sufficient to enable one to acquire a very fair knowledge of it. The construction is simple, and it contains many words of Latin origin, whilst the grammar presents no more obstacles to the student than the French or German syntax.

Russians are always said to be remarkable linguists; but this appears to be due, not to any natural gift, but to the fact that from early childhood the upper classes are placed under the care of French, German, and English nurses and governesses. They thus acquire these foreign languages

without difficulty, and we in England would doubtless be able to learn with equal facility if we were brought up under similar conditions.

In a work on travel and adventure I have some diffidence in introducing the subject of literature; but it is one of interest to many, so it may not be out of place to lightly review the general characteristics of Russian fiction, and mention some of the principal authors. Russian literature has many unique and peculiar attributes, rendering it unusually interesting to foreign readers.

Whilst in Russia I avoided all English books and newspapers, and devoted myself entirely to the language of the country, both for purposes of study and recreation. It was about that time that English fiction reached perhaps its lowest level, when books of lady novelists, who dealt with subjects better left alone, were much in vogue, so I did not miss much by abandoning English in favour of Russian literature.

It was refreshing, in those degenerate days of the modern novel, to turn from the inane indelicacies of fashionable fiction, from the hysterical emanations of the unhealthy imagination of the New Woman, then so much in vogue in England, to the luminous page of a literature that has in it all the life of true realism, whilst it does not flaunt in our faces those lower phases of human nature that are best left to the imagination of the prurient. Such a literature is the best Russian fiction of the century; such are the works, both prose and poetry, of Poushkin and Lermontoff; the tales and legends of Gogol; the romances of Turgenev and Dostoevski; the historical novels and other works of Tolstoi; the Siberian tales

of Korolenko; and the books written by Pisemski, Goncharoff, and Ostrovski.

In the works of all these authors can be found scarcely a line that could offend the most sensitive reader; whilst at the same time, although somewhat overclouded by a certain characteristic pessimism inseparable from this gloomy country, they are instinct with life and energy; they portray in vivid language great historical events; and their descriptions of the beauties of nature are not surpassed in the literature of any country.

There is indeed one notable production of Tolstoi's, notable only by reason of its "Zolaism," to which exception may be taken, for as a work of literary art it is not of much merit.

The *Kreutzer Sonata* is not pleasant reading, and its author's reputation has not been enhanced by this work. Nevertheless, those who have lived in the world, and seen much of life, and observed the frailties of human nature, cannot but acknowledge the truth of Tolstoi's philosophy. This work touches a weak point which will not bear close investigation; and it had better not have been investigated by means of such a book as the *Kreutzer Sonata*.

Russian authors, especially those of the first half of the present century, have had many difficulties to contend against. In constant fear of the press censor, with gloomy dungeons and Siberian prisons for ever before their eyes, they have had to curb their fancies and keep a close watch upon their pens. They were thus limited, both as to choice of subject, and as to the manner and even the very words in which they chose to express their thoughts. It must

have been galling indeed to an author to receive back his manuscript from the censor with many of his best lines obliterated, sometimes for the most paltry reasons, even if worse did not befal him for writing in a style that did not meet with the approval of the officials of the censor's office.

In Russian literature we do not find the exaggerated affectation of some modern writers, nor their technical inaccuracy; neither is there any of that bombastic verbiage which renders most of our historical novels so ridiculous and unreadable. We have here a pure literary style, abounding in appropriate imagery and rich in local colouring, which is unhappily but inadequately rendered in, and is in fact generally much libelled by, the unsatisfactory and ungrammatical translations to which those must have recourse who are not fortunate enough to be able to read the originals.

It is indeed a great point in favour of Russian fiction—a point evidencing the appreciation in which it is held—that it should have attained such a wide popularity in England, notwithstanding the fact that the greater portion of the public is acquainted with it only through the medium of indifferent translations. The ability to make good translations is second only to that of producing original works, and it is in this matter of translations that our literature is so notably deficient; whilst many gifted Continental writers have not considered it beneath them to apply themselves to the translation of foreign authors, with the result that in France, Germany, and Russia there are versions but little inferior to the originals. At the same time, whilst

considering the disadvantages under which Russian authors have laboured, we must not lose sight of those points which have told in their favour and assisted them in their work.

It may be said that at the commencement of the present century there was no Russian literature, with the exception of the works of Kriloff and Jhukovski; whilst in Western European countries many subjects had already been exhausted, and authors had, comparatively speaking, some difficulty in producing original work, having less material at their disposal.

But Russian authors had a vast virgin field for their operations. The palace, the drawing-room, the cottage of the peasant, the romantic history of a nation only then emerging from barbarism,—all these, so different from aught else the world has seen, furnished an inexhaustible mine of literary wealth to the Russian author. Nor has the latter been slow to avail himself of these advantages, nor failed in extracting gold from the literary mine.

Many Russian authors have a European reputation, and Tolstoi and Turgenev stand in the first rank of the writers of fiction of all countries. In view of the difficulties with which authors had to contend, it is not surprising that the literature of Russia is not voluminous. Forbidden subjects had to be avoided; and in some cases writers of genius flung aside their pens in disgust at the treatment they received at the hands of the censor, and thus their productions were limited in quantity.

Dostoevski spent ten years of his life as a political prisoner in Siberia, and the horrors he experienced in

prison are vividly depicted in his *Letters from the Deadhouse*. There can be little doubt that his mind was unhinged by what he went through—a surmise emphasised by his later production, *Crime and Punishment*, one of the most remarkable works ever published, depicting as it does the intricate workings of a diseased human mind.

It is not a matter of surprise that the great Turgenev should have preferred to live and die in voluntary exile rather than pass a crippled existence in the country that gave him birth. Tolstoi alone stands out, a Colossus indifferent to the censor of the press, spared perhaps by the generosity of a more enlightened ruler and a more advanced civilisation.

Two great poets, Poushkin and Lermontoff, both disciples of Byron, adorned Russian literature during the first half of the present century. They both came into prominence during the period when Byron's influence was so deeply felt throughout Europe, and they followed him closely—so closely indeed that they have with some reason incurred the charge of plagiarism.

At the top of the Tverskoi Boulevard, in Moscow, stands the statue of an intellectual and thoughtful-looking man of an Ethiopian cast of countenance. This represents Poushkin, a man of African descent, and the greatest of Russian poets. He was not only a poet, but also directed his attention to prose-writing with considerable success, and some of his writings are characterised by great dramatic force. *The Captain's Daughter*, a tale of the rebellion raised by the Cossack Pougachoff, is of considerable historical interest, as depicting the course of one of

the most remarkable insurrections recorded in the history of any country.

Others of his works, both prose and poetry, are of considerable interest. Some of them have been dramatised, and the *Queen of Spades* forms the subject of one of the best Russian operas. Poushkin was killed in a duel with a French *emigré* in 1837, when he was but thirty-nine years of age; but he had already succeeded in winning the foremost place among Russian poets.

Lermontoff was first brought into prominent notice by his lines written on the occasion of the tragic death of Poushkin. He was at that time a young subaltern of the Guards, and, certain expressions in the above-mentioned lines having aroused disapproval in high quarters, the author was banished by way of punishment to a regiment serving in the Caucasus. This event was not altogether distasteful to the poet, except in so far as it brought home to him the want of freedom in his native land, whilst it exercised a most beneficial effect on his writings. Already in his early youth he had spent some months upon the Caucasus; had been impressed by the rugged beauty and grandeur of Elburz and Kazbek; had listened to the music of the mountain torrents, and built air-castles of the clouds that floated in fantastic shapes over the snowy peaks that pierced the sapphire skies of those pure regions. He now produced a series of Eastern tales, abounding in fine descriptions of the mountains, the valleys, and the rugged scenes he loved so well.

Lermontoff wrote but little prose. His *Hero of Our Time* is the best known of his prose works;

it consists of an admirably-written and interesting series of tales, partly descriptive of the author's sojourn in the Caucasus.

There are in the gallery of men of action, both in history and in literature, persons before whom we involuntarily pause, attracted more by their personality than by their deeds or works. Such a personality belongs to the poet Lermontoff, whose character and career, like those of Byron, present an irresistible attraction to the imagination. The poet was of an unhappy disposition, at discord with all the world, by which, because it could not understand him, he felt himself badly treated. His tragic and premature death completed the romance of his somewhat eventful life. He was killed in a duel with a brother-officer in 1841, whilst undergoing banishment in the Caucasus for a second offence, in the twenty-seventh year of his age; but he had already succeeded in gaining a place beside Poushkin in the history of the literature of his country.

Lermontoff had frequent occasion to feel the weight of the heavy hand of the tyrants of his country. He found discipline irksome, and was often confined to the guardroom; yet he proved himself a brave soldier on the field of battle, and preferred a military career to that quiet life which his ample fortune and intellectual attainments could have accorded him. The last lines of his tale *The Princess Mary* are singularly applicable to the poet himself, as he doubtless thought when he penned the passage—

"And now in this dull fortress, when pondering on the past, I often say to myself, 'Why did I not

wish to take that path opened to me by fate, where the calm joys of a quiet mind awaited me? . . . No; I could not have borne such a lot! I am like a sailor born and bred on the deck of a pirate brig: his soul is bound to battle and storm, and when ashore he cares not for the shady grove or peaceful sunshine; he paces the livelong day on the sandy shore, listening to the murmur of the waves, and gazing out into the misty distance: does there not flutter on the pale line out there that divides the blue waves from the grey clouds, does there not flutter the long-wished-for sail, at first like the wing of a sea-gull, but little by little separating itself from the foam of the billows, and gliding swiftly but surely towards the desert shore? . . .".

I have been induced to dwell thus long on the subject of the poet Lermontoff, owing to that personal attraction of which mention has already been made, and would willingly devote more space to him were such within the scope of this chapter.

Turgenev, the most artistic of Russian writers of fiction, commenced his literary career soon after these two poets. Although perhaps not so well known to English readers as Tolstoi, his works are in most respects far superior to those of the latter author. Turgenev was a master of style, and all his writings are practically perfect as works of art and literary excellence. His descriptions are beautiful, whether of Russian life and character, or of the forests and steppes amidst which he passed his earlier days; and it is sad to think that he spent the greater part of his life exiled in foreign lands, far from the scenes he described so vividly.

Gogol, an eminent Russian writer, has been described as the Russian Dickens. His works abound in exquisite humour and pathos. He wrote but little, probably because he was in some degree insane, and composed only during lucid intervals, or, as some say, during his fits of insanity.

His *Dead Souls* is the most important of his works. Some of his comedies are excellent, one of them, *Revizor* (*The Inspector*), holding the first place among comedies on the Russian stage. His legends and tales of Cossack life are charming, and it is in some of them that his singularly beautiful descriptions of natural scenery are found. For a picture of Cossack life in the olden days, *Taras Boulba* can be recommended; whilst the curious Russian legends are also worth perusal.

Gogol's style is unique and peculiar; but his descriptions, whether of a forest, a river, or a steppe, are remarkably fine. A passage from the legend *A Terrible Revenge* will perhaps bear quotation. It describes the River Dnieper, which flows past the author's native town of Kiev, and runs somewhat as follows, although I can but imperfectly render it in English :—

"Wonderful is Dnieper in fine weather, when he pours his full waters freely and smoothly through forests and hills. He splashes not, nor thunders. You look, and do not know whether the great flood moves or not, and it is all like molten glass, and like a blue, mirrored road of immeasurable length flowing and pouring through the green world. It is fine, then, for the burning sun to look down from on high, and pierce with his beams the cold of the

glassy waters; and for the forests on the banks to be reflected in the flood. The forests with green tresses! They crowd to the waters together with the flowers of the fields, and, bowing down, look into them, and cannot look enough or admire enough with their bright eyes; and they smile at the river, and greet him, shaking their branches; in the midst of Dnieper they dare not look; naught, save the sun and the blue sky, looks there, and seldom a bird flies to the centre of Dnieper. Superb! there is no river like unto him on God's earth.

"Wonderful, too, is Dnieper on a warm summer night, when all things slumber,—both man and beast and bird,—and the great God alone sees earth and sky, and majestically shakes his vestments. From the vestments are scattered stars; stars burn and shine over the whole world, and all at once are reflected in Dnieper.

"Dnieper holds them all in his dark bosom; not one flies from him except to die out in the heavens above. The black forest, studded with sleeping ravens, and the rugged hills overhanging, attempt to hide him with their long shadows; in vain! there is nothing on earth that can hide Dnieper.

"Blue, blue, on he smoothly flows in the midst of night, as in the midst of day, seen as far as the human eye can reach. Hugging nearer to the banks from the night cold, he looks like a stream of silver, flashing like a blade of Damascus steel; and then the blue flood awakes. Wonderful again is Dnieper, and he has not his equal on God's earth! When the dark blue clouds roll in mountains across the sky, the black forest shakes to the roots, the oaks

tremble, and the lightning, breaking through the clouds, lights up the whole world,—frightful then is Dnieper! The watery billows rumble, striking on the hills, and with flash and groan fly back, and weep, and melt away in the distance."

A writer, whose works have, I believe, not yet found a translator, is Korolenko, who is still a comparatively young author. His Siberian tales are charming and original, and deserve much wider notice than they have hitherto attained. His style is simple and unaffected, and appropriate to the subjects he selects, whilst it is evident that he possesses great powers of observation, and an intimate knowledge of the people and scenes he describes with such a graphic pen.

One of the most extraordinary spectacles of modern times in a so-called civilised country is that presented by the censorship of the press in Russia. One can understand the difficulties under which authors labour, when they write in constant fear of imprisonment or exilê—the punishment sometimes for a few unguarded words or sentences. No book is permitted to appear until it has passed through the hands of, and been approved by, the censor; and many works emerge from his office in a sadly-mutilated condition. Newspapers that, in the opinion of the censor, have offended, receive a warning for the first offence, are fined the second time, and finally may be entirely suppressed. Strict though it is now, however, this censorship is nothing to what it used to be forty years ago. Reforms were carried out during the reign of Alexander II., but even yet many absurdities are perpetrated in the censor's office.

Turgenev was on one occasion placed under arrest for a month, *by supreme order*, and afterwards sent to the country and directed to remain there under police supervision. His crime was that he had applied the epithet *great* to the poet Poushkin. No wonder that this and other persecutions so embittered Turgenev against the Government that he was eventually forced to live in exile. Thirty years later his mortal remains were brought back to be buried with great pomp and ceremony in St. Petersburg, where, after being persecuted during his life, he was accorded the honour of a public funeral—*by supreme order.*

At the same time that Turgenev was arrested, the editor of a Moscow newspaper was placed under police supervision for having issued his journal with a mourning border on the occasion of Gogol's death. In 1846 the censorship became so strict that the censor Uvaroff said to Prince Volkhonski that he wished Russian literature would cease to exist. Then at least there would be something definite, and, what was most important, he would be able to sleep in peace.

However, the state of affairs that existed during the reign of the Emperor Nicholas in the first half of the present century has already improved, and it is to be hoped that some day a more enlightened Government will remove all obstacles from the path of progress, and allow science and enlightenment to advance the greatness of an already great nation.

CHAPTER X

NIJNI-NOVGOROD AND THE VOLGA

Travelling in Russia—Strategical Railways—Hotels—Journey to Nijni-Novgorod—Description of the Market—Tartars—Caucasian Wares—Russian Methods of Dealing—The Town of Nijni-Novgorod—Voyage on a River Steamer—Burning of a Steamer—Sad Death of a Russian General—Tragedy and Comedy—Navigation on the Volga—Scenery—The Djiguli Hills—Moonlight on the Volga—A Solitary Waste—Kazan—Characteristics of the Russian People—Tartars of the Golden Horde—Rafts—Samara—Bandits on the Volga—The Alexandrovski Bridge—Steamer on the Shoals—Saratoff—A Gloomy Hotel—Museum—Tzaritzin—Steppes—A Howling Wilderness—Astrakhan—Fisheries—Fruit—Locusts—Armenians and Persians—Breaking up of the Ice on the Volga.

RAILWAY travelling in Russia is more comfortable than in England, although the trains are slow, and stop frequently when there happen to be stations. At most stations there are refreshment-rooms, where the travellers indulge in *vodka* and *zakuski*—the former an excellent liqueur—the latter consisting of various snacks of fish, cheese, caviare, or other articles, according to taste. The railways are all built under Government supervision, and a glance at the map will show that military considerations have largely influenced their construction, and that the lines are nearly all laid with a view to strategical requirements. I heard it stated that the railways near the western frontier are of a different gauge to the German lines, purposely so constructed

in order that trains from the latter country should not be able to run into Russia in case of war between the two Powers. But I was informed that the Russian rolling-stock was provided with a duplicate set of wheels fitted for running on German lines.

Travelling, whether in winter or summer, is not very interesting, for the country is flat and of a monotonous character. From the windows of the train one sees a bare expanse of steppe, or stretches of cultivation alternated by forest and morass, and in winter all is covered with snow. It is better to travel as far as possible by steamer, for the accommodation on the river vessels is excellent, and interesting fellow-passengers will probably be met with, although the scenery generally does not offer much attraction.

The hotels are not usually replete with every comfort, the domestic and sanitary arrangements generally leaving much to be desired; but, of course, in the great cities they are as good as in most Continental towns. It is in the provincial towns that they are most undesirable places of residence, where there seems to be always a paucity of soap and water, whilst a bath is an unheard-of luxury.

In the month of August, after having remained many months in Moscow and its suburbs, I determined to undertake a journey to Nijni-Novgorod, to see the great fair then in full progress. A twelve hours' journey from Moscow brings the traveller to Nijni-Novgorod, where the large and well-constructed railway-station forms a great contrast to the squalor and dirt of the part of the town where it is situated.

At first sight the place is not at all inviting. The Russians are not noted for cleanliness, and, of all towns in Russia, Nijni-Novgorod during the fair is probably the worst in this respect. I arrived there in the middle of August, when the business of the fair was at its height, and made the mistake of staying at a hotel in the market, and consequently in the midst of the dirt and clamour, instead of in the town, which is comparatively clean. It is situated on high ground overlooking the river and market, and appeared to me so pleasant in the upper part, where a fresh breeze blew across the heights, that I regretted being unable to make a longer stay there.

The market is, of course, the first attraction to the traveller. Looking from my window in the upper storey of the hotel, I saw around me an expanse of dirty leaden roofs, and beyond and above a gloomy leaden sky. A strong wind was blowing and howling mournfully round the corners of the streets, which were deep in slush, for heavy rain had fallen all night. The prospect was not pleasing, and passing funeral processions added to the depressing character of the scene. Wretched vehicles, driven by the dirtiest imaginable drivers, splashed past in the mud. Groups of Tartars selling Astrakhan lambskins stood about in the street below, and buyers and sellers of many nations crowded in the narrow byways.

Issuing forth from the hotel I made my way to the principal building of the market, where the strains of a military band made things more lively. This building, a large red-brick pavilion, on the top

of which several flags were flying, was occupied by shops from Moscow and other large towns. Here there was little novel to be seen, the surroundings being much the same as in the covered arcades of Moscow.

There were several Caucasian stalls, where silver-ware, daggers of curious workmanship, and other articles from the Caucasus, were offered for sale by the natives of that region, attired in the picturesque dress of their tribe. Besides this large pavilion there were two other smaller ones built of wood, whilst the remainder of the market consisted of wretched wooden shops and warehouses, where articles from all parts of the world were exposed for sale. A great business is done here in furs from Siberia, and I saw also some fine tiger and leopard skins from Bokhara and other parts of Central Asia.

Of industries peculiar to the country there did not seem to be anything particularly attractive, if I except the beautiful lacquer-work made in Moscow. This is very expensive, if one purchases the best quality, but a cheaper imitation can be obtained at a reasonable price. In making purchases at the fair, or indeed anywhere in Russia, one must keep in view the prevailing custom of the country. The Russian is Asiatic in his method of dealing, for he asks three or four times its value for an article, and considers that all is fair in trade. Honesty in this respect is not a characteristic of the Russian nation. It is the same in all one's dealings with the people. If you desire a room in the hotel, you must haggle for the price, for the landlord is sure to ask ten roubles where he will take three. If you engage a

droschky or other vehicle, you must begin by offering the lowest possible fare of ten *kopecks*.

Duplicity is a characteristic of the people individually in their private dealings, as it is that of the Government in their diplomatic undertakings. In all things their object is to attain their end, regardless of the means by which success is ensured. In this the Orientalism of the Slavonic race is manifested.

Merchants come to Nijni-Novgorod from all parts of Russia to purchase their winter stock of furs; but Nijni Fair is not now what it used to be. The railways, which have now reached nearly every part of the country, facilitate transport and divert the trade from the rivers, so that the famous fair is no longer the necessity it was when the great waterways of the Volga and the Oka formed the principal lines of communication in Eastern Russia, and attracted much of the trade of Central Asia.

A great deal of the trade of Russia, and especially the manufacturing industry, is in German and other foreign hands; and it is noticeable that most of the large shops in Moscow and St. Petersburg are not Russian, but English, French, or German. Perhaps this is partly ascribable to the fact that Russia has for generations been entirely dependent on imported goods for all luxuries, and is only now beginning to learn how to produce such manufactures on her own account.

The shops in the market of Nijni-Novgorod are used only during the great fair, for in the spring, when the ice on the Volga breaks up, the whole of this low-lying part of the town is inundated. On the whole the market is certainly disappointing,

and I found the town much pleasanter, and almost as interesting. The town also offers material advantages over the market. In a hotel in the latter part I paid a large price for a bad dinner, whilst I obtained a much better one in the town at half the cost. There is an excellent custom in these hotels of having a tank in the dining-room, in which the guest can choose his own fish, and see it caught and carried off to the kitchen. Having seen enough of the fair, I hired a vehicle and drove over the wooden bridge that crosses an arm of the river. On the other side we passed through the town and ascended by a zig-zag road to the summit of the hill, which presented a pleasant contrast to the fair by reason of its cleanliness and quiet. Most of the shops were closed, the owners having removed their stock and set up business in the market. The highest portion is occupied by a large *kremlin*, whose turreted walls contain barracks, a cadet college, and other buildings. On the edge of the hill are some pleasant gardens and avenues of trees, whence a fine view can be obtained over the river with its shipping, the market beyond, and, farther yet, the forests and fields stretching away into the distance as far as the eye can reach.

On the third day of my stay I took passage for Astrakhan, and embarked on one of the steamers of the Caucasus and Mercury Company. There are many steamship companies possessing large and commodious vessels, built after the fashion of the American river steamers, with excellent cabins and *cuisine*, the fresh caviare and fish from which are something to be remembered. One company was

very unfortunate in 1893, a number of lives having been lost in the burning of one of its best steamers. Some cotton forming the cargo of the ship, and carelessly loaded, caught fire, and the captain steered his vessel for a sandbank, and ran aground; but many persons, losing their presence of mind, jumped overboard, and were drowned or killed by the paddle-wheels, whilst others perished in the flames. A few who waited until the ship struck were saved. Among the victims was a well-known Russian general, a hero of the Russo-Turkish War, whose death was very sad. He sprang overboard and swam safely to shore, only to drop dead on reaching dry land, for the excitement was too much for him, and caused the rupture of a blood-vessel in the heart.

The tragedy was not unmixed with comedy. A few days after the burning of the steamer, a friend of mine met a merchant wandering disconsolately on the bank near the scene of the catastrophe. He was searching for his wife's body, but not for the sake of finding the beloved remains; she had left him and had gone off with another man by this steamer, the worst of it being, said the merchant, that she had taken the keys and two thousand roubles, which he now had some hope of recovering.

Such or lesser catastrophes of a similar kind are not uncommon on the Volga, partly owing to carelessness in loading, and partly to the inflammable nature of the cargo—generally cotton or naphtha. My ship, the *Tzarévich Nikolai*, steamed off from the quay at about three o'clock in the afternoon. We obtained a splendid view of the picturesque market town as we went down the river. At this

time of the year the navigation of the Volga is very difficult owing to the paucity of water, and consequent frequent shoals and sandbanks, which oblige the steamer to take a very zig-zag course. Posts to indicate the course are placed at intervals along the banks, and at night the track is marked by buoys with different-coloured lanterns. During the greater part of the voyage a man stands in the fore-part of the vessel with a long pole, with which he takes frequent soundings.

The scenery of the Volga, although picturesque, is exceedingly monotonous. The right bank is generally high, hilly, and well-wooded, and to the left is a flat plain, sometimes covered with forest. As far as Kazan the stream flows in an easterly direction, and many villages are passed, one of which, Rabotka, is well known for supplying nearly all the sailors and pilots on the Volga. Part of the river is very beautiful, where the Djiguli hills rise like an ancient grey wall from the bed of the stream. Their heights frown down on the flood below, looking in the bright moonlight like old castles with grey, ruined battlements. It is pleasant on a moonlight night to stand on deck when the steamer is gliding rapidly through the silent waters, faintly rippled by a gentle breeze, and glittering in the moonbeams. There is then something awful in the vast and mysterious silence, in the gloom of the great forests, and the shadows of the overhanging cliffs.

Sometimes the scene, even by day, is one of impressive solitude, when the whole country on either side is covered with dark forests stretching to the far horizon. At times no living thing appears in

the waste, not a bird, not even a solitary sea-gull, although numbers were following in the wake of the steamer when we left Nijni-Novgorod. On the second day of our voyage a very strong wind blew, and the water was quite rough. Dark, heavy rain-clouds hung over the river, and swept along the tops of the gloomy forests. The weather cleared about mid-day when we approached Kazan, after passing a range of bare hills on the right bank, and saw the shining domes and white houses in the distance.

The town, being situated at a distance of seven versts (four miles) from the river, is not visible from the harbour. Kazan is a town of Tartars, and many of these were awaiting the arrival of our steamer, with shoes, soap, and other articles for sale. Soap is the principal product of the place, which supplies the whole country with that commodity, although it is an article not much used in Russia. The Tartar inhabitants of Kazan, I am told, are far superior to the Russians, being sober, and honest in their dealings.

There still remain considerable colonies of Tartars all over Russia, remnants of the nomadic hordes that dominated the country for more than two centuries. In turning over the page of history, one cannot but be struck by the wonderful faculty of the Russians for enduring the heavy hand of despotism and oppression. From the alien rule of the Tartars, after their development had been arrested for centuries, the Russian people emerged, where perhaps less gifted nations would have sunk for ever into obscurity or ceased to exist.

In spite of the scarcely less oppressive government of their own rulers they have grown and flourished, and established their empire as the second among the kingdoms of the earth. Their progress is doubtless due to their extraordinary faculty of being able to endure all things without murmur, and to a certain Oriental fatalism inherent in the Russian character. For the Russians can scarcely be described as an energetic or enterprising people, although they are able to plod stubbornly on towards the goal they have in view.

Kazan is a town of some historic interest, having been the principal city of the Tartars of the Golden Horde until it was taken by Tzar Ivan the Terrible, in the sixteenth century, after a bloody siege. It contains some Mahomedan mosques and some good buildings, including an ancient monastery and a *kremlin* with a tower, but it is not much more interesting than other Russian provincial towns, which are dull to a degree. From Kazan the river turns due south, and the country at first appears less wild: extensive tracts of cultivation are met with, and forests are scarcer. On the voyage we passed many large rafts made of trunks of trees, on which were built neat little wooden houses; some of these rafts are towed by steamers, and some appear merely to float down stream with the current. Our next stopping-place was Samara, a large town, picturesquely situated on the left bank of the river. Here I hired a vehicle and drove round the town, which possesses, among other buildings, a fine church, from the top of which a good view of the surrounding country can be

obtained. Samara is dreadfully dusty. A strong north wind frequently prevails there, and, as the town is bleak and bare, and exposed to the northern blast, it must be a very uncomfortable place of residence.

It was in former times the scene of some terrible events, as were most of the towns on the Volga. In 1617 it was taken by the bandit Razin, who drowned all the principal gentlemen and officials in the river. The larger town of Saratoff suffered the same fate.

Below this place the river near Seizran is spanned by the great Alexandrovski Bridge, which was built in 1880. This immense iron structure stands on twelve stone columns; on the right bank it rests upon a rock, and on the left upon a buttress. In point of size the bridge is the seventh largest in the world. It was constructed at a cost of seven million roubles. A strong head-wind was blowing when we steamed away from Samara, after a stoppage there of four hours. Some little way lower down the river we passed a steamer stuck on the shoals. She signalled to us for assistance, but, owing to the shallowness of the water, we were unable to approach near enough to render any help.

Before reaching Saratoff the character of the country changes, vegetation becoming sparser, whilst the left bank is one vast steppe. We arrived at Saratoff at about ten o'clock in the morning on the fourth day after leaving Nijni-Novgorod. The town is situated at the end of an arm of the river, and lies in a hollow and on the slopes of the surrounding hills. It is a large town, and has increased

in importance since the railway was extended to it, but only a small part is well-built and prosperous-looking, the remainder being a collection of more or less squalid habitations. In the middle of the town is a fine square with the theatre and museum, and close by is a large market-place, something like the bazaar of an Eastern town, where large quantities of fruit and fish are exposed for sale. There is also a very pleasant boulevard, where people walk in the evening, apparently a much more respectable resort than the boulevards of Moscow.

Being favourably impressed by Saratoff, I resolved to stay there a couple of days, in order to become acquainted with a typical Russian provincial town; so took up my quarters in the most central position that could be found. In the evening I dined at one of the hotels, a veritable dead-house, which is worth describing, as it is a type of many hotels in Russian provincial towns. You enter a dimly-lighted hall, scantily furnished with chairs and tables. The waiters flit from room to room, having no occupation, for no guests come here. No one visits this house of the dead, for such it seems to be. At the door stands the melancholy landlord, sadly looking down the street for the guests who never come. The walls are mildewed; the dust lies thick upon the floor; and the cruets are rickety. All is unspeakably sad. The waiters look gloomy and half-starved. But why are there so many waiters? Two fling open wide the folding doors, one takes your hat and stick, another your overcoat, yet another shows you your chair, whilst number six brings the *menu*. All speak in half-whispers; all move care-

fully and silently, as though fearing to disturb the dust on the floor. Even the very thin grey cat appears to smile mournfully as it rubs itself against your chair, and ravenously devours the proffered bread. This sadness infects the visitor; and you seem to throw off a burden on leaving the gloomy building, and once more emerging into the fresh air. All hotels, however, are not like this; and next evening I dined at a comparatively prosperous and lively one.

There is in Saratoff a museum of which the inhabitants are very proud, but on entering it I was much disappointed, seeing that its principal contents consisted of a wretched collection of pictures and sketches, portraits of nobodies, and bad landscapes. There were some interesting relics of Turgenev, including several of his manuscripts, and some portraits and casts of his head and hand. There was also a number of Chinese and Japanese curiosities; old Russian pottery, coins, books, stones, and crystals from Siberia and the Urals; models of steamers, including one of the Imperial yachts, a man of straw in armour, and sundry rags and rubbish. The solitary suit of armour was chiefly noticeable from the fact that the man of straw who occupied it had on an old pair of kid gloves, which looked rather incongruous.

Formerly the province of Saratoff was considered the most distant and isolated of Russia, but it is now opened up by the development of the Volga trade and by railways. From Saratoff downwards the river becomes more monotonous and uninteresting than ever. Rocky hills alternating with bare

steppes are the principal characteristics of the banks, and Tzaritzin is the only place of interest until we come to Astrakhan. The town of Tzaritzin stands on the high bank of the Volga, and is cut in two by a deep ravine containing the River Tzaritza, named, so tradition says, after the wife of a Tartar khan. The town carries on a considerable trade in grain, flax, and iron, and all the business of the place is concentrated at the harbour below. The neighbourhood of the town is a sandy steppe, as indeed is all the country along the Volga from here to Astrakhan. In 1772 Peter the Great visited this place and inspected the fortress, when he presented the town with his cap and stick, which are preserved in the town-hall to this day.

From Tzaritzin to Astrakhan is a bare monotonous steppe, where the eye in vain seeks relief. These are the celebrated salt steppes, which have served as a broad way for invasion to several wild tribes, who destroyed whole populations. It is all a howling wilderness, a flat desert, appearing as if it could support no living creature. The wretched Kalmuk huts and ghostly trees do not enliven the mournful scene, and there are dark, fearful patches to be seen, quagmires where whole flocks and herds may sink and be lost for ever.

After such scenery it is pleasant indeed to sight the town of Astrakhan, situatèd on the left bank of the Volga, eighty versts from the place where the river falls into the Caspian Sea. The inhabitants of this town are principally occupied on the fisheries of the Volga. The place is celebrated for furs, melons, and grapes. It owes the foundation of its fame to

Peter the Great, who inaugurated the port in person in 1772. It is hot and unhealthy in summer, and not too clean. In fact, in this respect and by reason of its varied population, it is quite an Asiatic town. In the spring all is green and fresh, but the summer sun, bringing with it immense flights of locusts, soons turns the surrounding steppe into an arid waste.

The population consists of a collection of many Eastern nations. Armenians appear to predominate, and most of the trade is in their hands. The Persians, distinguishable by their high caps and Eastern costumes, have their own mosque.

The breaking up of the ice on the mighty Volga presents, I am told, a wonderful sight. The signs of it, appearing with the spring thaws, quickly develop themselves. The snow near the banks melts, leaving blue spaces on the ice, especially where the river flows through meadowland; the water flows on to the surface; lines and streaks, with here and there deep fissures, appear in the ice. In places, especially over the shallows, the ice rises in hillocks, and at last a characteristic crash warns the *Volgar*, as the dweller on the river is called, that the catastrophe is near, and that *Mother Volga* will soon be free. There are few, even among the *Volgars*, bold enough to venture across the ice at this time, and the long, seemingly endless, river is quite deserted, but still motionless. Then the warm spring mists, the rays of the March sun, and the rain do their work. First, the ice near the banks moves with a crashing noise, and is heaped up into icebergs, moving slowly, and stopping on the sandy capes and shallows; at last

the ice in the centre starts and presses down stream, forcing out that near the banks and throwing it far inland. The whole river is now a mass of broken ice, moving slowly with the current. It presents a scene of wrack and ruin: barques, wooden buildings, and fallen trees are mingled in the glacial chaos. Dull crashes are heard in the far distance. Colossal icebergs are borne along with the swiftness of steamers, and the liberated waters roll in turbid waves, washing the banks and carrying away trees in the current. Much of the wreck is cast ashore, and the rest finds its way to the Caspian Sea.

CHAPTER XI

SUPERSTITION AND CIVILISATION IN RUSSIA

Superstition among the Peasants—Bacon on Superstition—The Iberian Madonna—The Russian Clergy—Popular Rumours—Strange Stories—A Wicked Witch—Story of the Three Chanticleers—The Russian Peasant—Drunkenness—Strange Marriage Custom—Want of Energy among the Russians—Siberia—Sakhalin—Horrors of the Penal Settlement—Barbarous Act of Superstitious Peasantry—Cholera Riots at Saratoff—Corrupt Administration—Stoppage of the Tzar's Train—Fear of Officials.

A FOREIGNER who resides for any time in Russia cannot help being struck by the backward state of civilisation among the lower classes, and the gross superstitions entertained by them.

The government of Russia is characterised not only by political oppression but by religious intolerance, all outside the orthodox Greek Church being apparently regarded as beyond the pale of ordinary humanity. Such a state of affairs would probably not be tolerated by a less docile or lethargic race. It is not surprising, having regard to the factors that combine to arrest the progress of the nation—the form of government in Russia, the past history of the country, and the unlimited influence of a superstitious religion in the hands of an unscrupulous clergy—that enlightenment, in the narrowest sense of the term, does not exist in many parts of the great empire; nor is it to be wondered at that

in some remote regions the people are but little removed from barbarism. It is strange, however, to find such ignorance and superstition in the centre of European Russia, not far from Moscow; but the superstition of the Russian peasant is almost incredible, as may be seen from some popular rumours that are in circulation amongst the peasantry, and from some stories which are rife in the land.

Let us see what that wise man, Francis of Verulam, says of superstition: "The causes of superstition are: pleasing and sensual rites and ceremonies, excess of outward and pharisaical holiness, over-great reverence of traditions which cannot but load the Church, the stratagems of prelates for their own ambition and lucre. . . ."

Such, in fact, are among the causes of superstition in Russia. Nowhere are sensual rites and ceremonies more prevalent, or outward and pharisaical holiness carried to such a degree as in that country, where graven images are worshipped in the streets. One of the most extraordinary customs in the Russian Church is that of sending the *icon*, or image of the Iberian Madonna, in a carriage and four to the houses of sick and dying persons. This *icon* is kept in a small chapel at one of the gates of the Kremlin of Moscow. As the carriage containing it, drawn by four horses, passes through the streets, the people cross themselves, and many prostrate themselves bareheaded on the pavement.

When in the Kremlin one day I witnessed a procession of priests carrying *icons* and banners; they marched all round the place, accompanied by a concourse of people, whilst the bells clanged in

the belfry, where I stood. The entertainment was certainly impressive, though somewhat barbaric.

The Russian lower classes are in reality almost idolaters. They know little, if anything, of their religion beyond its outward forms, regarding it, not from a spiritual point of view, but as an outward ceremony of mysterious import, whilst they have a childish faith in the efficacy of their images to perform miracles on their behalf. This faith is fostered by the clergy, more especially by the monks, and clergy of high order, and by the Holy Synod, who manufacture miracles for convenience and profit, for their own ambition and lucre. Such miracles, performed by wonder-working *icons*, are implicitly believed in by the lower orders.

The village clergy are, as a rule, simple fellows—in many cases knowing but little more than the peasants themselves, living their quiet lives among the people, to whom they devote themselves in sickness and in sorrow.

The upper classes hold the orthodox religion in respect, and keep its outward forms, but regard it much as thinking people regard religion in other countries; the fact being, that whilst the lower classes have remained stationary for centuries in their primitive condition of ignorance and superstition, the higher orders have advanced with the times, and have become imbued with Western European culture and modes of thought.

Whilst in search of some information regarding Russian folk-lore in 1893, I chanced on many popular rumours that were rife in the country in that year, all implicitly believed in by the peasantry.

Why was there a famine in Russia in 1891–92? How are we to explain the appearance of cholera in the summer of 1893, and what measures are useful to exclude such an unwelcome and uninvited guest? How are we in future to secure ourselves against cholera and famine? What of rumours of war?

These and other questions, interesting to Russian educated society, are not unknown to the common people, who sometimes decide them in a very original manner. In different parts of Russia different stories circulate among the people, offering solutions to the foregoing questions. In these stories the naively mysterious and miraculous elements predominate. In them are sometimes related the sudden and unexpected appearance of inhabitants of the heavenly regions; sometimes the apparition of various coloured chanticleers; the transformation of a new-born child into a speaking firebrand; or the cunning wiles of some witch or wicked person.

Notwithstanding all the absurdity of such tales, the people implicitly believe in them, and repeat them as real facts, giving the minutest details, and even naming the localities where they took place. Such stories are not new to the masses. They generally circulate in time of trouble, and bring the people into such a condition that they are ready to believe almost anything. Some such tales were prevalent in 1892, and the events narrated in them were said to have taken place in the Chern district of the Tula government. The tales, it is true, are entirely contradictory. Sometimes they aver

one thing, and sometimes another, with reference to the same subject, especially as regards the dark region of futurity. Not in vain saith the proverb: "Popular rumour is as the waves of the sea." If the wind blows one way, the waves roll with it; if the wind changes its direction, so also do the waves upon the deep; from its very nature there is no stability in the ocean swell. So also there is no consistency in popular rumours. Under the influence of numerous, various, and sometimes quite insignificant causes, the popular frame of mind changes, and with it also the popular rumours. It may happen that an evidently false report—started, God only knows, by whom and why—calls forth alarming fears or joyous anticipations, and gives rise to corresponding rumours and stories.

Why in 1891-92 was there a great drought, causing the loss of both the summer and winter crops? The culprit, said the people, was a witch. She rode at night on a broom over the villages, and plucked feathers from the tails and wings of the cocks—five feathers from each bird. This is the reason why, in the summer of those two years, the cries of the frightened birds in the yards were frequently heard. Only the cocks roosting on the harrow escaped the witch, because the harrow is made in the form of a cross, and evil spirits cannot approach it. The witch tied the plucked-out feathers into bundles, and, flying on her broom over *Mother Russia*, swept away the rain-clouds, and so prevented the necessary rain from falling on the parched surface of the earth.

Feeling the approach of death, she at length

thought to repent her sins. She repaired to a priest at the confessional; but when she repeated her great and deadly sins the church shook, and the priest said he was unable to absolve her, as she was not worthy of the Holy Sacrament. So the witch died, and the peasants dragged her body with iron hooks into a grave, burying it without prayers. Then rain fell, but it came too late. Now there was no reason to fear famine, said the peasants, for the witch was dead.

The following reported occurrence led the people to expect an exceedingly bloody war and an unusually abundant harvest. In another district of the Tula government, in one of the villages, the churchwarden noticed one night, that when the cocks crew in the village the first time, a cock could also be heard crowing in the church. The occurrence was repeated three times during the night. The watchman wondered what cock could have got into the church, and his astonishment increased when the same thing happened again next night. On this occasion he went and awoke the priest after the cock in the church crew the first time, and the two together listened to the cocks crowing at the same time as the village chanticleers. Next morning the priest assembled all the wardens, and, having informed them of the mysterious occurrence, asked if anyone was willing to pass a night in the church.

A young peasant who volunteered was shut up in the church at nightfall.

At midnight the village cocks crew; the peasant looked fearfully around; the doors opened spontan-

eously; a white cock came in, flapped his wings, crew and disappeared. The cocks in the village crew, a second time, and a red cock appeared and went through the same performance; whilst on the third occasion a black cock came in.

Then a monk in black vestments came from the altar and addressed the peasant. "Do you understand what these cocks foretell?" On his replying in the negative, the monk said, "The white cock signifies that there will be an unusually abundant harvest; the red cock denotes dreadful bloodshed; and the black one—death, so that there will be no one to consume the corn."

The ignorance of the peasants in some parts of the country is astounding. They do not even know the name of the reigning Tzar; they abjectly fear all the local authorities—perhaps not without reason. They frequently live in a state of the most dreadful poverty and want; drink all they earn; and will sometimes, during the harvest season, work all day for a glass of *vodka* and a few *kopecks*.

Their condition is probably, in the majority of cases, more miserable than in the days of serfdom. One writer, in referring to the way in which their children are brought up, says, "Like Abraham, the peasant offers up his children daily as a sacrifice, but no angel comes down from heaven to stay his hand." Is it a wonder that he seeks refuge in drink? That is his only consolation, his one enjoyment in life. He groans under the very burden of life, and it is a wonder that he consents to live.

A strange custom is observed in the Yaroslav

government with regard to the wedding ceremony. On the day appointed for the wedding, the bridegroom, with the full knowledge of everyone, steals the bride from her parents' house, and next day the wedded pair return to ask for forgiveness.

There is perhaps nothing more remarkable in history than the rapid rise and progress of the Russian Empire in modern times. A thousand years ago the country seems to have been in much the same state of civilisation as other countries of Europe—France, Germany, and England. Then came the invasion of the Central Asian hordes, and civilisation was at a standstill under the Tartar yoke. During this period other countries had been advancing; Germany had reached an enlightened stage, but Russia was still surrounded by hostile nations—by Poland and Sweden and Turkey on the European side, whilst, of course, from the eastern boundary nothing could be expected. For these reasons, and the difficulty of access to it, the country had little or no communication with civilised nations until Peter the Great broke the power of the Swedes, overthrew Poland, and pushed his empire to the shores of the Baltic Sea. By the introduction of foreigners into the country, and by the establishment of universities, Peter began the work of enlightenment, which was continued by Catherine, who made another window to the west by extending her empire to the shores of the Euxine.

From that time the country developed rapidly; but this rapid development, except from its territorial aspect, is less remarkable when we consider

the high state of civilisation which had at that time been attained by other nations with which Russia had communication. For Russia thus found a ready-made civilisation, an advanced science, a literature and social culture; and these she adopted in their entirety, and did not have to develop from nothing.

The territorial expansion of the empire is due, apparently, more to the force of circumstances than to any characteristics of energy or enterprise in the Russian people; for they seem to be greatly wanting in both these qualities. Their want of energy and enterprise, not only individually, but as a nation, is exemplified by the fact that in the northern regions of the empire there exist whole tracts and populations almost entirely unknown, to which the Government directs no attention whatever, and which are not only not advancing on the road to civilisation, but are sinking deeper and deeper into the gloom of barbarism and idolatry. So far back as two hundred years ago these regions were better known than they are now. Some Russians in search of ivory and furs, before the time of Behring, established themselves on the shores of the Hunter's Sea. The descendants of these Russians have become (or, shall we say, remain?) savages, have degenerated both physically and morally, and are dying out under the ravages of disease.

On the Chukotski peninsula is a large population of 150,000 souls. These people know, perhaps happily for themselves, neither Russian nor any other power, but live in freedom by means of fishing, and keep up communication only with

American whalers, with whom they trade, receiving arms, powder, and other manufactured articles in return for furs and oil. Russian influence has not (or had not, five years ago) reached this distant region; Russian enterprise has overlooked it. Communication with the peninsula by sea would seem to present no insuperable difficulties to people of energy and enterprise. The English and the Swedes have dealings with some of these northern tracts; whereas the Russians have none whatever, and only know of the existence of this part of their empire through information obtained from foreign sources.

For the foregoing notes regarding the Chukotski peninsula I am indebted to a Russian newspaper. From a Russian magazine entitled *Russian Wealth* I obtained some particulars regarding the penal settlement of Sakhalín, which may be found interesting. The only thing surprising about this article is that the press censor permitted its publication.

The settlers, apparently, willingly leave Sakhalín, and, if the authorities allowed it, that island would soon be depopulated. So, at least, say the settlers themselves. Certainly, the recollection of what they have undergone there in penal servitude is not likely to inspire them with any great affection for their cold and foggy land. In Vladivostok various stories of what goes on in the island are current. One woman "settler," as those are termed who have completed their period of penal servitude, described the customary mode of reception in the colony of Sakhalín. On the arrival in the island of a party

of female convicts, they are given over as housekeepers to male settlers, and, if any of the new arrivals object to this, they are forced into compliance by corporal punishment.

This change from obligatory work to obligatory concubinage was the frequent cause of flight, violence, and bloody crime. This story was confirmed by an inhabitant of Vladivostok, who added that, although this distribution of women at the will of the gaolers was at first practised, still there was hard labour for females, and some of them saved themselves by undergoing it. Afterwards, however, this distribution to the settlers, in place of work, became a regular custom, and only those escaped who became servants.

From this forcible concubinage with, frequently, people for whom they have an antipathy, not only women, but men, attempt to escape. Why the same object could not be obtained by voluntary marriages, it is impossible to divine; for surely by such a system nearly all the women would be married within a short time of their arrival, and the new-comers would establish legitimate families. Every measure to facilitate marriage with the Japanese and aboriginal women would also lead in the same direction. There would also arise a necessity for facilitating divorce from husbands or wives remaining in Russia, so that the contracting parties may recognise their union as a lawful marriage. Every encouragement should be given to the establishment of family-life among the settlers of Sakhalín, but, of course, force produces entirely opposite results. An engagement as servant

in the settlement serves as a form, but the lash forms the principal argument of love.

Whilst in Moscow I read in a private letter from a lady living at the place, details of an affair that occurred near Kharkoff, illustrating the state of superstition and barbarism prevailing among the peasantry in Southern Russia. A well-educated young girl from one of the large towns went to a family in this place as governess. Here another woman, who had some influence among the common people, took a dislike to her, denounced her as a witch, and ascribed to her influence any misfortunes that occurred in the district. One night, when the poor girl was on her way home, a number of peasants set upon her, knocked her down, beat her almost to death, and finally cut out her tongue. And this occurred in a so-called civilised country, and not even in a very remote part of it.

Such events are probably of by no means uncommon occurrence, especially in outlying districts, far from the large towns, where the light of civilisation has not yet penetrated the obscure understandings of the people. The riots which took place at Saratoff in the year 1892 during the cholera epidemic bear evidence as to the degree of civilisation attained by the Russian peasantry. When at Saratoff I heard some details of these riots. The ignorant peasants, having got it into their heads that those who succumbed to the disease had been poisoned by the doctors, attacked and burnt the hospital buildings, destroyed the surgeons' instruments, and wrecked the police-station. Two men

were killed during this riot. A hundred and fifty of the rioters were sent to Siberia for various terms, and the ringleader was sentenced to death, but this sentence was subsequently commuted to life-banishment to Siberia. Similar disturbances occurred in many other towns. It will be observed that riots of the same kind have taken place among the ignorant natives of India, under similar circumstances. During the prevalence of cholera epidemics the peasants in some parts of Russia organise processions to exorcise the cholera fiend, much after the fashion of the natives of India, who in like circumstances march round the bazaars, accompanied by a noise of tom-tom and drum, to drive away the demon of disease.

The Government officials and corrupt administration of the country are mainly responsible for the condition of the peasantry, which has become worse instead of improving after the abolition of serfdom. An instance of the corruption of the administration, exposed in 1893, was common talk in Moscow at the time, although nothing about it was allowed to appear in the newspapers. I heard the following story from various sources, and do not doubt that it is mainly true. The train conveying the Tzar from the south to Moscow in that year was passing through one of the famine-stricken districts, when it unexpectedly came to a standstill. It appeared that about three thousand peasants had assembled, thrown themselves on the line, and refused to move until they had seen the Emperor, to whom they wished to present a petition.

One account of the incident was to the effect

that a detachment of soldiers under command of an officer had arrived on the scene, and that the peasants had been fired upon, and some of them killed. Thereupon the latter slew the officer, saying to the soldiers, "Now you cannot shoot us, as you have no one to give the command." This part of the story, however, requires corroboration, and I cannot vouch for the truth of it.

The peasants refused to comply with all entreaties to clear the line, declaring that they would rather be killed by the train. The Emperor then alighted and received their petition, which stated that two years before, when there was cattle disease in the district, many of their cattle had been killed by order of the Government. For this they were to receive compensation, but they had waited for it in vain.

The Tzar asked why they had not sent in a petition to him; the reply was that they had sent two, but received no answer. Thereupon, it is said, the Tzar distributed a large sum of money, promising redress, and gave orders that compensation should be sent without delay to those people who had suffered loss. It was subsequently discovered that the money for compensation had been sent in due course; but, as is frequently the case, it had stuck to the hands of the officials through whom it was to be paid.

Such is Russian administration. No doubt a similar state of affairs prevails all over the country; and the corruption of the administration, the difficulty of obtaining redress, and the fear in which the peasants hold anyone who has official status,

prevent the establishment of a better order of things.

There must surely be a limit to the patience even of the long-suffering Russian peasant, and it is probable that a day will come when he will understand something more than "God and the policeman," and strike for freedom.

CHAPTER XII

THE COSSACKS IN WAR

Origin of the Cossacks—1812—Degeneration and Dragooning—Characteristics of the Cossacks—Inspection by Tzar Nicholas—Russian Press and the Cossacks—Method of raising a Regiment—The Hetman Denisoff—Organisation, Equipment, and Training—Cossack Boyhood—The Cossack *Lava*—The *Venter*—Action at Corelichy—The Golden Epoch of Cossack History—Frays and Forays—Cossacks in Fiction—Action with the Tartars in 1774—Crossing Rivers—Attack on a Polish Position—The *Lava* in action against the Turks—Operations against the French.

WHILST in Moscow I saw a regiment of Cossacks march through the town. They did not look very smart, and appeared to be badly equipped and mounted; but their small horses are said to be excellent animals, with remarkable staying-power. The Cossacks have always been, from their origin, military communities, first established between the Muscovite Tzars on the one hand, and the Tartar khans and Polish kings on the other, but at times hostile to Russia also. They were established on the borders, their principal territories lying on the rivers Don and Dnieper.

During my stay in Russia I made some study of the Cossacks from a military point of view, both from personal observation, and by a perusal of such matter on the subject as is to be found in the military magazines and papers. And I think that some



COSSACKS.

information regarding these famous partisans and their tactics in war may be interesting to military readers.

The traveller in Russia who possesses an inquiring mind will doubtless hear much of the degeneration of the Cossacks, should he seek for information among those who are acquainted with the subject. Indeed the Russians make no secret of the fact, but aver with truth that the Cossacks are not what they were a hundred years ago, or at the commencement of the present century, when all Europe rang with their fame after the great part they played during the retreat of the Grand Army in 1812. The causes of this degeneration, which is perhaps only temporary and remediable, are not far to seek. Races of warlike people, all the world over, who have enjoyed a long period of peace and have turned their swords into ploughshares, must lose some portion of that military instinct which formerly was a part of their nature. So with the Cossacks.

Inured to war in days gone by, for ever contending with the hordes of the Tartar khans, sometimes defending their hearths and homes against their Eastern foes, at other times carrying the war into the enemy's country, continually engaged in frays, forays, and raids, they became so far a warlike race that so much of their lives as was not passed in actual campaigns was spent in military exercises. They lived to fight. From the Central Asian hordes they learnt those tactics which were subsequently employed with such effect in harassing an army composed of the flower of European chivalry, led by the greatest soldier the world has ever seen.

But now all this is changed. The Cossack no longer goes forth to foray as in days of old. He lives a peaceable life on the land he cultivates for the support of his family, and when called out for military exercises he no longer employs his ancient tactics, but is taught in the same manner as the regular troops, so that he has to some extent lost those special qualities which formerly distinguished him.

Perhaps it is in fact this "dragooning" of the Cossack that has spoilt him, even more than a long period of peace. An excellent irregular soldier has been transformed into an indifferent regular. The Cossacks on their small horses cannot expect to contend in close order and regular formation against European cavalry.

It is now some twenty years since the Cossacks were included in the organisation of the cavalry divisions of the regular forces, and since the general regulations were made applicable to them. People at that time began to say that the Cossacks were dying out; that there were no true Cossacks left; and that it would be best to turn them into dragoons. The campaign of 1877 did not raise the status of cavalry in general, nor did the Cossacks in particular have an opportunity of distinguishing themselves in that war with the Turks. Acting like regulars in close formation, they on their little steppe ponies produced but slight impression compared with that made by a charge of heavy cavalry, and they were used more for minor purposes as orderlies and escorts to convoys.

In days when he only did not rob and pillage

who was not strong enough to do so, the Cossack was doubtless a robber, but in more modern times, although something of a freebooter, he was no worse than his contemporaries. From being a freebooter he has become an agriculturist, and only the songs and tales of his fatherland remind him that he belongs to a race of warriors by profession. Nevertheless, is it not possible that his qualities remain, though latent, that his warlike spirit smoulders, but only awaits an opportunity to burst into flame? Probably, a long campaign would again bring the Cossack to the front, and his deeds would perhaps vie with those of his forefathers in 1812.

Their so-called degeneration has doubtless been due in great measure to a proper want of appreciation of their qualities by the military authorities. Already in 1836 they were in a state of decadence, although there must have been many among them who had taken part in great events a quarter of a century before.

On 2nd November of that year the Emperor Nicholas inspected the troops at Novocherkask, consisting of some twenty-two regiments of Don Cossacks and horse artillery. The inspection was very unsatisfactory. The officers and non-commissioned officers did not know their places, and even the regimental commanders seemed to have a vague idea of their front. To complete the effect, the Tzar noticed the wretched Cossack horses, the varied and worn-out uniform of the men, and the absence of that firm seat on horseback which formerly distinguished the Cossack.

Certainly, things have improved since then, and

will in all probability improve still further, for a strong party in the Russian military press has lately been directing attention to the Cossacks, and future wars may yet show that they only require an opportunity to prove themselves as good warriors as their ancestors.

The Cossack regiments of former days were raised in a very irregular fashion. All depended on the commander, who was directed to raise a regiment, receiving a certain amount of equipment and clothing, with instructions regarding the numbers required, and the date on which the regiment was to be ready for service. The rest was left to the commandant, who was generally chosen by the Hetman from the aristocracy of the Don.

As an example, let us see how Adrian Denisoff proceeded to organise his regiment in 1787, when he received orders to raise a regiment of fourteen hundred men. He formed a council of some of those who had had experience in the work, and, having enlisted a sufficient number of men, divided them into *sotnias*, or hundreds; appointed two officers to every *sotnia*, and proceeded to make what was required in the way of clothing and equipment; horses were collected, for the greater part untrained and vicious;—so that, with all this, considerable time was expended in arranging the interior economy and training the horses of the regiment; and as Denisoff had but three months at his disposal, only the last few days could be devoted to military exercises. In these days the Cossacks were mostly illiterate, both officers and men, for the former were chosen from among the older and more experienced Cossacks. The only

regulations were some manuscript instructions; nor was there any drill characterised by fixed words of command.

But the Cossack was a warrior by birth and education. He was the son and grandson of warriors, and with his first accents learnt to lisp of war. From eight years of age the Cossacks rode fearlessly over the steppe on half-wild bare-backed horses. In the winter-time they built snow forts, which they attacked and defended, armed with snowballs. On holidays they fired at marks, cut posts, and indulged in various warlike games, whilst the long evenings were passed in listening to tales of raids and adventures with which the veterans fired the spirits of their sons. Thus they did not require any length of training. They learnt from experience, and from the lips of the veterans when they gathered round the camp-fire on their way to the seat of war. They were armed with guns of various calibre, with swords, spears, and pistols; all of which weapons they knew well how to wield.

And now, having equipped our Cossacks, let us take them forth to fight, and see what tactics they employed with such fatal effect. On outpost duty they were the ears and eyes of the Russian army. In foraging, in reconnoitring, and in carrying out any difficult or dangerous enterprise of guerilla warfare, the Cossacks were unequalled in the Napoleonic wars. Their principal tactical formation, if formation it can be called, was the celebrated Cossack *lava*, which is somewhat difficult to describe, owing to the manner in which it was varied according to circumstances. This mode of operations

was, it is said, learnt from the Tartar hordes of Ghengis Khan and Tamerlane, learnt from the bitter experience of many a bloody fight, and afterwards used with success against regular cavalry.

The *lava* was not a regular formation, but a kind of national tactics, having no fixed order, subject to no rules or words of command, but varied according to circumstances. The regiment was massed together, or stood in masses of *sotnias*, according to the orders of the commandant, the front generally occupying a considerable extent of ground. Each Cossack attached himself to his *uriadnik* or non-commissioned officer; each *uriadnik* kept his eye on his *sotnik* or centurion; and all followed the standard of the commandant, or that of the *stanitza* or Cossack village. The scouts gave information of the enemy's approach; the regimental commander called up his *sotniks*, explained his intentions regarding the attack, and told them how to fire, whether from horseback or on foot; and notified what signals he would give. The *sotniks* repeated the instructions to the cornets and *uriadniks*, and the latter to the Cossacks. Sometimes, after this explanation, when already in sight of the enemy, the commandant would address his Cossacks, calling upon them to attack the enemy boldly, and not put their commander to shame. And they with one voice would reply that they would gain him honour or die—a promise which was invariably fulfilled. Apparently, the regiment listened to the commander's speech, broken up into groups, and then, inspired by his words, they quickly turned and deployed into a long extended line with flanks thrown forward, ready to

attack or commence their manœuvres as the case might be. The *lava* was varied in form, and had far other appearance than that of an attack in extended order, yet it was attended by neither anarchy nor chaos.

This is what the French Marshal Moran said of the Cossack tactics in 1812: "We [the French cavalry] deploy, and boldly advance to the attack, and already reach their line; but they disappear like a dream, and we see only the bare pines and birch-trees. An hour later, when we have begun to feed our horses, the dark line of Cossacks again appears on the horizon, and we are again threatened with an onslaught. We repeat the same manœuvre, and, as before, our operations are not attended with success. Thus one of the best and bravest cavalry forces the world has ever seen was tired out and disorganised by those whom it considered unworthy foes, but who were nevertheless the real liberators of their country." Such was the Cossack *lava*. Having scattered to the extent of a couple of *versts* (two thousand yards), the Cossacks would be unable to hear the orders of their commander; and to establish order by means of the repetition of the words of command by all the officers would give rise to too much noise in the ranks, in the midst of which it would be difficult for the *lava* to "appear and disappear like a dream." All were silent. The Cossacks ceaselessly followed their officers in a swarm, and all changes of direction and pace, and the signal for the attack itself, were made by means of the sword, the hand, or the movements of the horse. The comprehension by each Cossack of the object of

the manœuvre; the determination to strike as many of the enemy as possible,—these are what gave the idea to the movements of the *lava*, whilst attention to the commandant gave order and simultaneity to those movements. Supposing, for instance, that the *lava* occupied with its front an extent of two *versts*, in which extent there is a small but swift stream and a narrow ravine. The object of the manœuvre is to entice the enemy, a force of cavalry, towards artillery and infantry concealed behind a bush-covered slope at a distance of some four *versts*, or four thousand yards. The *lava* advances at a walk. Arriving at the stream, a number of Cossacks, at a signal from their commander, drop from their horses, which are taken charge of by a few comrades in the rear, and conceal themselves along the bank, whilst the remainder cross, and the *lava* proceeds on its way. Arriving within two or three hundred paces of the ravine, more Cossacks halt, and the *lava*, now looser but occupying the same frontage, continues to advance on the hostile cavalry, firing from on horse-back, and galloping to within pistol-shot of them. But no sooner does the enemy send out one or two sections to drive off the bold horsemen, than the *lava* gives way, the flanks thicken, and from flanks and rear the Cossacks throw themselves on their pursuers.

Finally, this manœuvring begins to harass the enemy and arouse his anger. He sends out a regiment or two to punish the Cossacks, who, retiring, assemble into two groups, one of which makes for the stream, whilst the other takes the direction of the ravine. At twenty or thirty paces from the obstacle, the Cossacks of each group turn swiftly off to the right

and left and pass round it. The closely-formed squadrons launched in pursuit cannot so quickly change the direction of their charge. Some fall into the stream, under fire of the Cossacks in concealment on the farther bank, and others, disordered in crossing the ravine, are caught by the other ambush, whilst at the same time the *lava* swarm has turned back and attacked them fiercely in flanks and rear. The result is the retreat of the hostile squadrons; the despatch of a larger force, and a new enticement by the *lava*,—this time towards the stronger ambush of infantry and artillery.

For the success of such an undertaking, it is obviously necessary that none of the manœuvres should be repeated. An endless change of locality, of time of year, and of day and night, affords means for the variation of the operations; so the *lava* is endlessly varied, formless, and intangible.

There is another somewhat similar Cossack manœuvre, termed a *venter*. On the Don a *venter* is a fishing-net stretched on a succession of hoops continually decreasing in size, and terminating in a *cul-de-sac*. The fish, deceived by the first expanse, in the end finds itself in a confined space where it cannot turn.

In this manner the Cossacks select an enclosed locality, having several ravines representing the meshes of the net, and entice the enemy into an ambush. This manœuvre will be best understood from the following example taken from the archives of the Russian General Staff—

"On 8th July 1812, at Corelichy, the enemy appeared from the direction of Novgrudok, in three

columns of cavalry, but, being met by a headlong charge in flank from the Cossack regiments, could not hold Corelichy, and returned to Novgrudok. Night came on. General Platoff, Hetman of the Cossacks, pursued to Mir, and, arriving within three *versts* of that place, halted to collect his scattered forces. Having received instructions to hold this point, the Hetman formed an ambush termed a *venter*, which was arranged as follows:

"In front of the village of Mir, on the road to Corelichy, was posted a force of a hundred men, for the purpose of observing the enemy and enticing him towards Mir; and on the right and left sides of the road ambuscades of one hundred Cossacks each were made, so that when the party on the road had enticed the enemy between these ambushes, they might attack his flanks, whilst the retreating party faced about and joined in the fight. A regiment posted at Mir was to support this attack, whilst the remainder acted under the immediate command of the Hetman.

"Platoff's dispositions were crowned with complete success. Three regiments of Polish *uhlans* under General Turno fell into the ambuscade on 9th July, were utterly defeated, and pursued fifteen *versts* beyond Mir, losing many killed and two hundred and forty-eight prisoners, including some officers. The loss of the Cossacks in this action was very slight, for they did not exchange shots with the enemy, but attacked him straightway with their lances."

Such were the tactics of the Cossacks during the epoch of the great Napoleon, regarding which Bronzevski says: "In the day of trial, glorious for Russia

but fatal to Napoleon and France, the Don Cossacks stood in the first rank of the defenders of their country. The great deeds performed by them in the war of the fatherland form the golden epoch of their history, and surpass all the glory and renown won by them in previous campaigns." As water falling drop by drop loosens a stone, so did the operations of the Cossacks undermine the existence of the Grand Army, and contribute to its destruction.

The life of the Zaporozhtzi, or Cossacks of the Dnieper rapids, in former times, has been well described by Gogol in his *Taras Bulba*, where excellent descriptions may be found of their camp, and of their raids into Polish territory. Operating against the Tartars in 1774, the Cossacks, man for man, were equal to or even stronger than their foes. Both Cossack and Tartar were well mounted on small steppe horses, rode them with equal skill, and were alike skilful in the use of arms. The moral superiority was on the side of the Cossacks, the numerical on that of their adversaries. It was at this period that the celebrated Platoff, at that time a colonel though only twenty-three years of age, and subsequently a famous Hetman, came to the front. Appreciating the conditions of battle with the Tartars, he perceived that the employment of the *lava* would have been foolish, as it would have been impossible to tire out his Tartar foes. Each Cossack would have been set upon by two or three Tartars, and in a short space of time the *lava* would no longer have existed.

When, in April 1774, Colonels Platoff and Larionoff were directed, with their Cossack regi-

ments and one gun—altogether a force of not more than a thousand men—to escort an immense convoy of supplies for the Cossacks in Kuban, the Tartar khan, Devlet Hiré, resolved to avenge his defeats. He had on his side, including the forces of the mountain princes, an army more than twenty times as numerous as the Cossacks. With these troops he took up a position under cover near the river Kalala. However, it was not so easy to deceive the vigilance of the Cossacks.

Having guessed the intentions of the enemy, Platoff and Larionoff chose a convenient spot, parked their convoy, and awaited the onslaught. The Tartars thereupon advanced to the attack, firing not very accurately from on horseback; nevertheless, the Cossacks suffered severely. A third of their number and many horses had already fallen, when Larionoff proposed to Platoff that they should surrender; but the latter persuaded his comrade to await reinforcements, for which single Cossacks had been despatched. Towards evening Uvaroff's Cossacks and Bukhvostoff's Hussars appeared on the scene, and joined hands with the convoy in dispersing the Tartars. In 1864 the Ural *sotnia* defended itself against the Turcoman hordes at Tkan in the same manner.

The Cossacks are skilled in crossing streams, and even broad rivers. They have, in addition to others, the Tartar method of crossing with the *sala*, which consists of a platform constructed of reeds, on which the saddle and carbine are placed. The Cossack with his horse then plunges into the water, the *sala* being tied to the horse's tail, whilst the man holds on to the mane and swims across.

In the papers of the celebrated Hetman Denisoff we find the following narrative: — "During the Polish rebellion of 1792, in the action of 18th September on the Visla, Ferzen, the commander-in-chief of the Russian army, decided to cross the river at a forest in which were the enemy's troops and batteries. After a cannonade on both sides, two of the Cossack regiments, Ivan Karpoff's and Serebryakoff's, received the order to cross the Visla directly on the enemy's batteries. The Cossacks divested themselves of their uniforms and their horses of their saddles, rushed out of the forest with lances only in their hands, and, uttering fierce shouts, plunged into the Visla. The Poles were so alarmed at this attack that they abandoned all points and fled."

On 16th September 1809 Platoff's advanced guard and Miloradovich's corps met the Grand Vizier's army at Rassevat. Prince Bagration, commander-in-chief of the Russian army, directed the battle in person. Count Platoff's journal in the archives of the Russian General Staff, tells us:—"In front moved a thick line (the *lavą*) of Cossacks, under command of Count Stroganoff. In rear came the infantry in three columns, having columns of mounted Cossacks and dragoons on the flanks. The Cossacks commenced the action by firing from horseback, and in places attacked with their lances, and soon beat back the enemy's disordered crowds of horse. Then the Cossacks retired to the rear and flanks to breathe their horses, and the infantry attacked in squares. As soon as the enemy was overthrown and commenced to retreat, the Cossacks, dragoons, and uhlans took up the pursuit. At the

town of Beylik, eighteen *versts* from the field of battle, a portion of the Turks took to boats, and sought safety on the far bank of the Danube. But the Cossacks observed some Turkish sailing vessels higher up the stream filled with the fugitive enemy from Rassevat. Colonel Karpoff's six Don Cossack guns dashed ahead and sank four of the boats, whilst the remaining six managed to reach an island near the left bank of the river. Some Cossacks then swam across with incredible boldness, reached the other side, and, having slain all the Turks who had not yet succeeded in escaping from one of the boats, returned with six boats and the guns they contained."

After the occupation of Moscow by the French in 1812, there was for a time a cessation of hostilities, during which the Cossacks closed in on all sides and established themselves in forests or ravines, whence they issued forth and harassed the enemy whenever an opportunity presented itself. The important effect of their operations was so well understood by Napoleon, that he frequently issued special orders regarding the measures to be taken for warding off their attacks.

On 7th October 1812 Murat wrote:—"My position is terrible. . . . It is impossible to forage, without great risk of being captured by the enemy; not a day passes that I do not lose some two hundred men. How will this end?" And this hopeless state of affairs was due almost entirely to the operations of the Cossacks. We have yet to see that their operations in future will not be equally successful.

In Germany military literature, writers of repute have been engaged in considering the question of the best mode of contending against Cossack tactics, to which considerable attention has lately been directed in Russian military circles. The Germans foresee great difficulties, should occasion arise for their cavalry to meet the horsemen of the Don. And it behoves all those who contemplate such a possibility to devise a means for repelling the Cossack *lava*.

Combined with regular cavalry, and employing their national tactics, the Cossacks may prove even more serious adversaries than they were in 1812, for they may have a knowledge of the movements of regular troops as well as their own manœuvres. They may harass their enemy's cavalry, draw them on to the attack, and "disappear like a dream"; but in their places will be seen not merely "bare pines and birch-trees," but threatening squadrons of heavy cavalry, fresh and ready to attack the disordered and exhausted pursuers of their Cossack comrades.

CHAPTER XIII

HINGOLI AND PANTHER-SHOOTING

Hingoli—The Road to Cantonment—The Hot Weather at Hingoli—A Shady Garden—The Khair River—Small Game—Wild-fowl Shooting—Green Pigeons—Panthers—Singhi Ghaut—Dacoits—Panther shot by Night—Bear killed—Ahnd Trackers—Panther killed at Oundha—Two Panthers shot at Gadalla—Panther on the Purna River—Put to flight by Wild Bees—Unwillingness of Natives to give Information—A Stern Chase—Panther killed—To the Purna River again—Panther killed with Buckshot—Poona—March to Beder—Beder City and Fort—Fish swallowing Snake and Snipe.

In September 1893 I left Russia, travelling home by way of Warsaw and Berlin, and February of the following year found me on the way to India, after an absence of nearly two and a half years.

In the meantime my regiment had marched from Ellichpur, in Berar, to the station of Hingoli, about a hundred and twenty miles distant, in the northern part of the dominions of the Nizam of Hyderabad. Hingoli, situated at a distance of eighty miles from the railway at Akola, and twenty miles from the Pein Ganga, where that river marks the Berar border, is a small station garrisoned by one cavalry regiment, one battalion of infantry, and a battery of field artillery of the Hyderabad Contingent. It was doubtless chosen as a military station owing to its proximity to the large town of Nander and to the main road from Hyderabad to Nagpur.

In former times the people in these parts were turbulent and unruly; and the Sikhs, of whom there is a large colony at Nander, gave a considerable amount of trouble to the Nizam's Government, whilst the whole country was overrun by marauding bands of Rohillas and Pindaris. A sharp engagement took place in 1857 at Chichamba, near Hingoli, between our troops and a party of Rohillas, when a British officer and a number of men were killed.

The country is now quiet, but so recently as 1894 there were bands of armed dacoits in the district, and in that year a party of these marauders was dispersed by the troops, and its principal members killed or captured.

A long winding road, stretching like a white ribbon for many a league over hill and plain, through jungle-land and field, connects Hingoli with the distant line of railway. Were it not for that long dusty road, and the stage-cart drawn by pairs of tired ponies that daily winds along the weary way, the station would be completely cut off from the outer world. As it is, a sense of desolation, of utter loneliness, comes over the traveller when for the first time he reaches the crest of the low line of hills overlooking the broad valley where the cantonment lies, in the hot weather appearing, with its glaring, white-washed buildings, like a vast graveyard; for all is bare and still.

So it was in the middle of March 1894 when I arrived there. But in the rainy season, when the grass has sprung up and the trees have put forth their leaves, the little station wears a very different aspect; and the white, thatched houses, nestling

among *neem*, tamarind, and other trees, pleasantly greet the eye of the traveller after his long and weary journey.

The broad Khair River, flowing by the eastern outskirts, and the two placid lakes fringed with feathery bamboos and thorny acacias, and covered in places with lotus leaves and bulrushes, add to the beauty of the scene; and, together with the background of low bush-covered hills, behind which rise higher hills, blue in the distance, combine to form a surpassingly picturesque landscape.

But how different it all is in summer! No foliage is there to rustle in the wind and relieve the aching eye. If a breeze does stir the leafless branches of the trees, it scorches like a blast from Hades. The very birds gasp for breath with wide, gaping beaks, and all living things seek what shelter they may find from the rays of the scorching sun. There lies a dreary expanse of plain, with burnt-up red hills at the back. The river has shrunk to a tiny thread, with here and there a pool scarce large enough for a buffalo to wallow in. The lakes have become mere expanses of mud, with a little weed-choked water in the centre, over which the black and white pied kingfishers hover at dawn and at the setting of the sun. At noontide the fierce sun beats down on the whole scene, and scorches all living things, and pulverises the parched earth, which cracks into innumerable fissures beneath the baking, burning rays.

I have described the road to Hingoli as weary; and weary it is to the traveller who comes straight through in the mail-cart, spending twelve or more

hours on the dusty way. In such case, in the hot weather, it is better to travel by night, for the heat during the day is well-nigh unbearable. But if one has a few days to spare, it is not unpleasant to travel leisurely, halting at the little wayside rest-houses, which stand invitingly amid shady groves of trees at every tenth milestone, and passing the day in pursuit of the antelope and other game that may be found on the cultivated plains or jungle-covered hills. The cavalry lines—long rows of mud-built, thatched huts standing on the shore of the lake—mark the northern boundary of Hingoli; beyond is the seldom-used racecourse, lying on the far side of the high enclosure wall of the small cemetery, where stones and columns of various fashions mark the last resting-place of those who have died here in exile.

On the margin of the lake is a well-grown and luxurious garden, where one can find shelter from the burning sun even in the hottest season,—where oranges and plantains cluster, and pomegranates peep out from their leafy canopies; whilst vegetables of all kinds grow in profusion, and some roods planted with sugar-cane afford an attraction to the wild pigs that come here from the neighbouring jungle. Here bright birds, golden orioles, and rollers with turquoise plumage, and paradise flycatchers dressed in emerald green, find a haven, whilst long lines of screeching green paroquets fly in towards evening to find a roosting-place, looking like flights of arrows as they cut the heated air. Some distance beyond the garden the river flows in a shingly bed, reflecting in its glassy stream the tall palms standing on the banks, and the storks and cranes that stand, each on

one leg, gazing solemnly into the calm depths. In the cold weather, flights of wild-fowl, geese, duck, and teal of many kinds come to the lakes from beyond the northern barrier, whilst a fair number of snipe may also be shot.

There is very good small-game shooting in the vicinity of Hingoli, the list comprising antelope, gazelle, hares, pea-fowl, grey partridges, painted francolin, sand-grouse of two kinds, and quail of various species. We used to make many good bags within a few miles of cantonments, and on a successful day the bag would contain most of the above-mentioned varieties of game. In addition to these a few florican were sometimes shot, but they had become scarce, partly owing to their extermination in the breeding season. Sometimes I saw bustard, and on one occasion six flying together, but never succeeded in bringing any to bag. Once when I was beating for pea-fowl a great hyena ran out close to me, and dropped on receiving two charges of No. 4 shot. In the cold weather the sport on the lakes was excellent, and we used to shoot many hundred ducks between October and March. We had two boats on the lake, and used to make up large parties for the shooting, the guns being distributed at various points on the shore and in the boats, and others concealed in the rushes that grew on the far side of the water. Of duck shot at Hingoli during my stay there I noted the following species: — Gadwalls, pintails, ruddy sheldrakes, red-headed pochards, common pochards, white-eyed pochards, shovellers, comb duck, common teal, garganey teal, whistling teal of two species, and widgeon. Of these the gad-

walls were the commonest. The mallard, which is the duck most generally met with in Northern India, does not appear to come as far south as the Deccan; at least I never met with any in that part of the peninsula.

At some places near Hingoli there were vast numbers of green pigeons—an excellent bird for the table, although not affording much sport; whilst most of the large and deep wells in the district were well stocked with blue-rocks.

There are a great many panthers in the vicinity of the cantonment, and I brought a fair number to bag during the time of my residence there, although I did not exert myself much in their pursuit. In the month of May, hearing of the presence of panthers at Singhi, a village some twenty miles off, I rode out and encamped there for a couple of days. Not knowing the country, I had some difficulty in discovering the whereabouts of the animals, for the villagers would give no information, and none of the goats tied up as bait were killed. But for a fortunate occurrence I would have returned to Hingoli without firing a shot.

The country was characterised by low rocky hills covered with stones, and intersected by deep ravines containing sparse bush-jungle. Not far from my camp a narrow pass led through the hills over the Singhi Ghaut, celebrated as a resort of robbers. In fact, some dacoits had been captured there a month or two before, and a well was pointed out to me into which it was said the Sikh dacoits had been in the habit of casting their victims.

I was sitting at breakfast the morning after my

arrival in camp, when a large number of vultures appeared, circling over a small hill in the neighbourhood of the pass. Scenting a kill, I sent my orderly on horseback to the place, and he soon returned with information that he had found a young buffalo, evidently freshly killed by a panther. An inspection of the place showed that it was impracticable for beating, so I had a screen of bushes made against the side of the hill, and at night concealed myself behind it to await the panther's return.

Having missed several panthers at night with the rifle, I determined to try the effect of buckshot on this occasion. By nine o'clock no panther had come, so I went to sleep, trusting to the influence of the feline's proximity to arouse me at the right moment. At ten o'clock I awoke. The moon had risen in the meantime, but was clouded over; however, it was light enough to see the buffalo moving, evidently owing to some animal tugging at it. Just then the moon shone out, and the head of a panther appeared over the kill, apparently regarding me intently. The head soon disappeared again, and the feast proceeded. This occurred twice before my gun was ready, the panther pausing at intervals to look in my direction. On its third appearance the head received a charge of buckshot full in the face, and, when the smoke cleared, the panther's tail, the only part of the animal visible from behind the kill, could be seen beating the ground convulsively. Soon the tail was still, and I went out and found the panther dead, with the whole charge in its head; so brought it in behind my screen, and slept until morning.

This was a female panther, small although full-grown; indeed the natives declared that she was twelve years old, because she had twelve lobes to her liver; at any rate, she had managed to kill a buffalo about five times her own size.

Soon after the commencement of the rainy season in 1894 I again camped near Singhi, at a village called Jaum, where there is a good camping-ground and a famous jungle for bears, although these animals are now much reduced in numbers. One night a panther seized a dog close to my tent, and another day this same beast was marked down in a ravine; but he cunningly eluded the beaters, and broke about two hundred yards from me. On this occasion I shot no panthers, but killed a fine bear that was driven from her lair at mid-day. I stood waiting for her on the top of a hill, and when she reached the crest close to me she charged with a fierce growl, but dropped dead with a bullet through the head at a few paces distance.

There was a tribe of hunters here, and at other places in the vicinity of cantonments, called *Ahnds*, who were wonderful trackers. Most of them carry rusty old matchlocks or other primitive weapons, and they gain their livelihood almost entirely by hunting. When I visited Jaum again, three years later, these men tracked and marked down for me a panther and a bear, which were satisfactorily brought to bag.

In February 1895 I shot two more panthers, one of which walked down an open glade towards me when beating for pea-fowl near the village of Oundha, a place famous for these animals. The

other one killed one of my goats only six miles out of Hingoli, near the village of Gadalla, where I brought another panther to bag the following year.

In 1896 I shot two panthers that gave better sport than these animals usually do, for, although fierce, they are generally easily killed, and do not appear to be very tenacious of life. Early in November 1895 some Banjaras, a tribe akin to the gipsies, brought me information that a panther had been committing depredations among their flocks near the bank of the Purna River, about sixteen miles from cantonments. Having a couple of days to spare, I rode out one afternoon and pitched my camp on the margin of the river—a considerable stream, with steep banks rising from a rocky bed. On the far side of the river rose low, jungle-clad hills, with villages scattered at intervals along their bases, where the bush joined the cultivated plain. The hills were intersected by several nullahs, which the panther was said to frequent, and whence he issued at night to prowl round the neighbouring hamlets.

My shikaris Chunder and Nuttoo, of whom more will be said hereafter, had preceded me the day before, and on my arrival reported that they had seen the panther lying down in a thicket some two miles off, on the far side of the river. We proceeded to the place at once, and found a small nullah with banks overgrown by thick bushes, whose branches formed many a shady lair shielded from the heat of the sun. The panther had left the place where my men had seen it; so I proceeded cautiously up the nullah

with rifle at full-cock, peering into every thicket in hopes of seeing the spots of the beast; but we could find no trace of it. Therefore we tied up four goats in likely places, and returned to camp by nightfall. Early next morning I went to look at two of the goats, sending my men to see the other two. Mine were unharmed, but the other two were killed, one being partially devoured, and the other untouched save for the fatal fang-holes in the throat. More than this, my old shikari Nuttoo had seen the panther enter the nullah where the last kill lay, so there seemed to be every prospect of its being there still.

A beat was soon organised, and I took up my position in a tree overlooking the nullah. The beaters came on with wild cries and sound of tom-toms. Soon I saw the lithe form of the spotted beast outlined through the bushes as it sprang down into the nullah some thirty yards from me. The creature approached rapidly, and shortly appeared through a small opening in the bushes, with its paws placed on the bank of the watercourse, only the head and chest being in view.

The panther tumbled back to my shot, and I expected to see it lying dead, but, when the smoke cleared, it was seen making off up the nullah beyond me. Evidently, it was missed in some unaccountable manner, for the tracks revealed no spot of blood, nor had the beast spoken to the shot. I then went round to the head of the nullah, hoping that the panther might still be there, and took up my position in a large tree beneath which the creature had evidently been in the habit of devouring its prey, for the

ground was strewn with the bones and hair of many goats.

The beaters were nearly up to me, when suddenly they scattered like chaff before the wind, beating the air wildly with their hands and turbans. It soon became evident that the cause of the stampede was a large swarm of bees, disturbed during the beat. The bees were already upon me, but, clambering down from my tree, I succeeded in beating them off after running the best part of a mile. I was badly stung about the face and neck, and would have fared much worse but for the devotion of my faithful shikaris, who remained behind me in the track of the bees, on purpose to draw the enraged insects on to themselves, and so save their master. After this adventure we beat all the nullahs in the vicinity, but the panther could not be found. Certainly, he got the better of me on this occasion; but his fate was sealed, as I shall presently relate, although he was destined to live for more than another year, and to slay many village goats and dogs.

A couple of months after this incident I happened to be encamped, when on the march, at the village of Saorgaon, fourteen miles from the military station of Jalna, and a hundred miles from the scene just depicted. On arriving in camp my men told me they had seen some villagers with the remains of a goat which was said to have died in the jungle. Suspecting that a kill had taken place, I sent for the goat's remains, and found fang-holes in the throat—unmistakably proving that the animal had been the prey of a panther. Thereupon a villager was found,

who most unwillingly took me to the spot where the goat had been discovered. The unwillingness of the native to give any information under these circumstances is extraordinary, and I know not whether it arises from apathy or fear. A wild beast may be devastating their herds, yet the inhabitants will roundly deny the presence of a beast of prey, swearing by all their gods that there is no such animal in the vicinity, although one would think that they would be only too glad to assist in the destruction of the destroyer of their cattle.

This case was no exception. The villager declared that there had never been a panther in these jungles, and that the goat had died a natural death. But I soon found the wild beast's tracks on a footpath, thus proving the nature of the culprit. We then sent for beaters, and sat down to await their arrival. My shikari Chunder, who is gifted with a persuasive manner, now began to question the villager, presented him with some tobacco, and told him that he had nothing to fear, but would receive a reward if the panther were slain. And at length, wonderful to relate, the man not merely admitted that there was such an animal, but averred that he had seen it in the morning, and would show us where it was lying. Such is the astonishing perversity of Oriental human nature!

The beaters shortly arrived, and I took up my position behind a bush. There was only a small patch of jungle in the middle of the fields, and in this the panther must be lying. Soon a man sitting on the top of a tree signalled frantically that the

animal was breaking out to one flank. I ran to the place and saw him making off across the fields; so fired two shots, one of which cut the skin of his back. Then ensued a long, stern chase across the open fields. The panther ran, and I ran after him, keeping him in view for something over a mile, the direction he was taking being marked by the scattering in all directions of alarmed cattle and herdsmen. At length I ran the beast into a deep, bush-grown nullah, from which he was eventually expelled by showers of stones; and as he sprang across an opening in the bushes I doubled him up like a rabbit with a shot behind the shoulder, at sixty yards' distance.

And now, having slain this panther, let us return to the one on the banks of the Purna River, whose haunts I had occasion to revisit in company with another sportsman in December of the same year. The beast was cunning, and would not kill my tied-up goats; perhaps he connected them with the alarm he had experienced the previous year. So, on the second day of our stay in his domain, we sent back our camp equipage and rifles to Hingoli, intending to return in the evening, and in the meantime beat for some of the pea-fowl that abounded along the bush-clad banks of the stream. The villagers were not so apathetic as usual. In fact they seemed as anxious as ourselves to bring the spotted beast to bag, possibly because they had already received some of my rupees, and knew that success would be rewarded.

At two o'clock in the afternoon a Banjara arrived with news that he had seen the panther lying down

in the jungle, not far from the place where I had missed him on the previous occasion. We had no rifle or bullets, but fortunately found a few cartridges loaded with buckshot; so, having collected our beaters, in all only about a dozen, we proceeded to the place where the panther lay—a toilsome walk of some two miles over rocky hills. The panther lay in a broad valley covered with scattered bushes. I posted a man on each side of the valley, and sent the remaining natives round to drive the beast out, whilst we squatted behind a bush in a likely place. Soon after the beat began, a frantic yelling from one side of the valley announced that the game was afoot, and had tried to break out but had been driven back. And then suddenly the animal's head and shoulders appeared from behind a bush close to me. He saw me as I raised my gun, but I fired on the instant, and expected to see him coming through the smoke; but, when the air cleared, the panther was seen struggling on the ground in its death-throes. Hereupon the valiant shikari Nuttoo ran up and began to belabour the dying beast with his stick. The buckshot, fired at a distance of eighteen yards, had proved most effective, and dropped the panther on the spot. And so the beast paid the penalty of his crimes, even after the lapse of many months from the time when I had first set eyes on his spotted skin.

In October 1894 I spent some little time in Poona, a pleasant station, and the best in the Bombay Presidency. It boasts a club that is, I believe, unsurpassed by any in India; and as there are also a Gymkhana and a boating-club, there is no

lack of amusement. The boating on the river is delightful, and when on the stream one could almost imagine oneself on an English river, for the landscape, the green meadows on the banks, and groves of trees do not present such a tropical appearance as most Indian rivers. The cantonment is fairly healthy, and the climate is pleasant during the rainy season, but, as in most of our large stations, typhoid fever is generally very prevalent among the troops.

In November 1894 we marched to Beder, in a southerly direction towards Hyderabad, to take part in a camp of exercise there. The march was through a most uninteresting country, nor was there much sport obtainable in the part through which we marched. Beder is situated on high ground near the bank of the Manjera River, a considerable tributary of the Godavery. It was formerly the capital of the Bahmani dynasty, which came to an end in the sixteenth century. It comprises, besides the city, a great bastioned fort overlooking the plains, and now in a dilapidated condition. It must formerly have been an important stronghold, and some rusty guns of great size testify to its pristine strength. It is now a place of comparative insignificance, celebrated only for its metal-ware and historical associations.

Whilst we were on the march from Beder a large fish called a murrell was caught in Khair River. On cutting open the fish, a snake about eighteen inches long was found entire in its stomach. These fish are very voracious feeders, and I have on two occasions seen them take snipe that had been shot and had

fallen into the water in the lake at Hingoli. This must have been a very large fish to swallow the long bills, feathers and all. We tried to catch him with a hook and line, and a swallow for bait, but the murrell was too cunning for us, and would not be caught.



CHAPTER XIV

BISON-SHOOTING

The Melghat revisited—Drive of One hundred and twenty Miles—Narnala Fort—Camp at Pirkhera—Jungle Sounds—Fine Prospect—A Bull Bison—Wild Dogs—A Herd of Bison—Death of the Bull—A Tigress—A Midnight Vigil—The Construction of a *Machan*—Animal Life at Sunset—Night in the Jungle—Reflections—A Bison by Night—Dawn—Leopard and Hyena—Hyena killed—On the Track of the Bull—Wounded and Lost—A Jet-black Bull—Another Bison—Wounded—On the Blood-trail—Sambhur—A Family of Bears.

After my long absence from India, entailing an almost total deprivation of all sport, I was naturally anxious to visit the jungles again as soon as possible. So, having obtained a fortnight's leave, and not knowing the country in the vicinity of Hingoli, I determined to revisit the Melghat forest, in Berar, and started off on 15th April.

Leaving Hingoli by *tonga* (a two-wheeled cart drawn by a pair of ponies) at seven o'clock in the evening, I arrived next morning at Akola, eighty miles off, the chief town of East Berar. After halting here an hour for breakfast, I drove on in a bullock-cart forty miles northward through Akote, a prosperous town in the middle of the cotton-growing district, to the foot of the Satpura hills. Here my pony awaited me, and I rode up the hills by moonlight, for night had already fallen. On the

heights where I rested was the old fort of Narnala, something like that of Gawilgarh, near Ellichpur, described in a previous chapter. The fort, which was in ruins, was entered by a fine and massive gateway, and it contained a tank and a small bungalow, furnished by the civil authorities, where I passed the night. It was bright moonlight, almost like the light of day, and the deep shadows and fantastic shapes formed by the grey ruins might in imagination be peopled with the shades of the long-forgotten dead, the warriors who once lived in this stronghold, and by force of arms levied contributions from the inhabitants of the fertile valley of Berar.

At night my bed was placed in the open, as it was too hot to sleep inside, and when going to rest I nearly trod on a snake, a deadly species of *krait*, that was lying near. As my feet were bare, it would have fared badly with me had I not seen the snake in time to avoid it.

My men had preceded me with my belongings, and had made arrangements with the villagers at the foot of the hills to come at daybreak and carry my tents and other goods across a broad valley, and then farther up into the mountains to Pirkhera, a village in the heart of the jungle, inhabited by aborigines of the Korku tribe. My camp was pitched next morning under a large *peepul* tree on one of the highest uplands, not far from the primitive habitations of the aborigines, and I looked forward with pleasure to renewing my acquaintance with these forests, where years before I had spent some very pleasant days. The rustling of the wind among the trees; the scent of the blossoms of the

mohwa-tree; the short, sharp bark of the khakur; and the call of the jungle-fowl and pea-fowl,—all these struck upon the chord of memory, and brought back thoughts of bygone days, whilst they inspired hope of sport for the present expedition. Although scorching hot down in the plains, up here on the plateau a pleasant breeze was always blowing, rendering it comparatively cool at night and in the early morning.

On arriving at Pirkhera, I walked about half a mile farther into the forest to some higher ground, whence a good view could be obtained of a deep, broad basin formed by the hills. A small sambhur stag stood on the mountain-side for some moments staring at me, and then dashed into a neighbouring copse; a khakur ran barking in alarm up the slope; and when we reached the summit a fine prospect lay at our feet. There below us was waving grass, and sparse jungle, and thick gloomy forest: there were deep nullahs and open glades, and great giant banyans, and sweet-smelling mohwa-trees: and on one small hillock a big black bison was cropping the grass. As we watched him with eager eyes he moved slowly on towards some thick jungle, into which he presently disappeared, doubtless with the intention of lying down in those sequestered shades, for the sun was already beating fiercely on the open ground.

I hurried down in hopes of getting a shot, but the crackling of the dry teak leaves underfoot rendered silent stalking impossible. The bison heard us coming, and plunged into the thickest of the forest, without giving us a chance even of seeing him again. We then wandered across to a rocky

nullah, where some few pools of water still remained under the shade of the overhanging trees. Here we found the footmarks of a tigress in the soft mud on the brink of one of the pools, where she had evidently been to slake her thirst during the night. Having instructed my men to tie up a young buffalo here in the evening, I returned to camp to rest during the heat of the day.

In the afternoon we went out again to look for the bison we had already seen, and were not long in finding him. But he saw us at the same time, and in a moment disappeared behind the crest of a hill. I ran to the top, but was only in time to hear him breaking his way through the thickly-wooded ravine below. We then made a long detour, and late in the evening saw a bison, which immediately bolted on seeing us, at a distance of a couple of hundred yards. I ran about half a mile up and down hill to cut him off, and suddenly saw him standing in a deep ravine only fifty yards below me; but as only his haunches were visible from behind the trees, I did not fire at him, and he was soon out of sight. This was hard luck; and this bison—for it was no doubt the same one all through—was still destined to lead me a very long chase, for he was an exceedingly cunning beast, and had probably been hunted before.

The second day was uneventful. We saw some khakur and sambhur hinds, but no game to shoot at, although we explored a great deal of very likely-looking country. One khakur was barking most vociferously in the valley below, and, on going to find out the cause of his excitement, we found tracks of a

tiger which had evidently passed by. In the evening I put up a pack of wild dogs in thick jungle, but unfortunately could not get a shot at the vermin, which should be killed whenever opportunity offers.

Next day the sun was already appearing behind the hills when we left camp. At about seven o'clock I was going along a nullah, when a bison ran out of some long grass above me and rushed over the ridge. As he was end-on to me all the way, I could not get a shot, for my only weapon was a ·500 express rifle, and a bullet from such a small bore would be ineffective except for a broadside shot. I thought this bison was our old friend again, and, following as fast as possible, arrived breathless at the top, but could see nothing. I then started tracking, and in a few minutes my men came up, when suddenly there was a crashing noise in the nullah below, and a whole herd of bison broke through the jungle. It was useless to fire, as the bull could not be distinguished, and in fact we could only catch an occasional glimpse of the animals in the open spaces. Finally, three cows, distinguishable by their light chestnut colour, left the nullah and ran up a hill about four hundred yards off. They soon slowed down to a walk, and I watched the magnificent animals with interest as they wound along the open hill-side, occasionally stopping in the shade of a clump of trees, or in the shadow cast by the hills.

The remainder of the herd, consisting of four animals, including a bull, kept on down the nullah, which wound a long way round a great hill. They soon disappeared, and I then conceived the idea of

scaling the hill, on the chance of cutting them off on the far side. It was hard work, but in an hour we had reached the top and crossed the plateau to the other side. I sat down on the hill-side, and then saw four bison slowly emerge from the jungle, and come to a standstill in an open glade some two hundred yards off. It was a long shot, but the animals had already been alarmed, and it appeared to be my only chance. The bull came last. He was conspicuous by his shape and colour, even at that distance. Taking a steady aim, I fired, and they all went off at the shot, but only three appeared in the distance, so we knew that my animal was down. In a few moments I sighted him standing in a clump of trees, only about thirty paces from the place where he was hit. I hurried down, but he made off through the long grass. There was no blood, but tracking was easy, and before long I came suddenly upon him not more than ten yards off, facing me and looking very fierce.

He seemed to be about to charge, but his great heart failed him; another bullet behind the shoulder close to the first one knocked him over, and he fell with a crash against a clump of bamboos, and there died. He was a noble creature, and it seemed a pity to have slain such a harmless and splendid animal, but in his death the dream of years was realised: and the hunter must not moralise. He was a fine bull, and it was all that four men could do to carry the head slung on a pole to my camp, whilst a number of men were occupied for six hours in taking off the skin and head.

On arriving in camp we received news that the

tigress had killed my buffalo; two men, who had been sent to the place in the morning, reported that the tigress roared at them, so they naturally bolted. It was now mid-day: no beaters could be collected, for the village of Pirkhera contained only four men, including the wrinkled old shikari, who had been guiding me about his native wilds in search of game, and there were no other people for many miles around. I decided that the only thing to be done was to construct a platform, or *machan*, in a tree over the kill, and wait for a chance shot at the animal should she return in the evening to regale herself a second time on the carcase of her victim. If she did not come before sunset I might get a shot later on, for the moon would rise about an hour after dusk. To get a shot when sitting up over a kill is not a very sporting method of bringing one's game to bag, and is especially repugnant to most Europeans, because it is the plan usually resorted to by native shikaris. In this case, however, I could promise myself an interesting vigil, even if the tigress should not put in an appearance. The jungle teemed with animal life, and it was certain that many creatures would appear in the evening in the solitary glen where the carcase of the buffalo lay, as it contained the only water for some distance round, and in the hot weather the life of the jungle congregates near water.

In constructing a *machan*, the great thing to observe is comfort; for in an uncomfortable position it is impossible to maintain that perfect quiet necessary to success in this kind of shooting. In the depths of the forest the slightest sound puts wild

animals on the alert, and leads to the discovery of the dangerous intruder in their haunts. Therefore I obtained the largest *charpoy*, or native wooden cot, that could be procured in the village, and had it furnished with my cork mattress, blanket, and pillow, and securely bound to a large tree about twenty feet over the kill, and surrounded by a screen of branches to conceal me from view.

By four o'clock in the afternoon all was ready, and an hour before sunset I clambered up to my perch, taking my rifle and a leathern bottle of water, and settled down to pass twelve hours in the tree, although without much hope of seeing the tigress, as she had been disturbed in the morning. I sent all my men back to camp, and thus remained alone in the solitude of the woods; for it is a great mistake to keep a native with one on these occasions,—he is sure to cough or move at a critical moment, and frighten away the game.

Gradually the sun sank towards the forest-clad ridge that bounded the western edge of the glen. The wild animals of the valley began to move; the birds awoke from their mid-day siesta, and as the sun disappeared I heard creatures pattering about among the dead leaves with which the ground was strewn. A great grey mongoose with russet muzzle and feet came up the nullah to drink; some jungle-fowl commenced to move in a neighbouring thicket, and a cock crew loudly from the hill-side, and was defiantly replied to by another that seemed to crow louder still. Then some pea-fowl came forth, a gorgeous cock walking proudly with a bevy of hens.

It was now the witching hour, when the tigress might be expected. The kill had not been visited by vultures, which work by sight, and probably in this deep and remote ravine it had been concealed from their view. A solitary crow pecked at the buffalo's head. The stench arising from the carcase was not pleasant, but it had to be put up with, and I was becoming used to it. Suddenly there was a movement among the bushes above the pool. Was the tigress coming? Her tracks led in the opposite direction, but she might have made a detour. A heavy animal was evidently approaching, and the pea-fowl disappeared as if by magic. Then an ugly great hyena came to the water, drank, and was approaching the kill, when I threw at him one of the stones with which my pocket was provided to drive off such vermin. He looked up when the missile fell near him, and then ran off in the direction whence he came. Suddenly a khakur barked about a hundred yards down the nullah, and soon afterwards a sambhur called from the hill-side. No doubt the tigress was afoot, for those sounds were unmistakable evidence of the proximity of a beast of prey. I grasped my rifle and peered into the deepening gloom. No sign of catlike form! No sound of stealthy tread! The beast must have had cause to suspect something; soon afterwards a khakur barked continuously a long way off, and I concluded that if the tigress was the cause of the alarm she was taking her departure.

The sun had now disappeared, leaving only a faint diffused light in his track, and in this dark glen all soon became invisible and quiet, for the

animals "one by one crept silently to rest." The shadows disappeared, and everything was lost in the dusk of night. I leant back in my *machan* and looked out into the gloom, trying in vain to pierce the murky depths, and listening intently for the approach of the expected tigress. But no sound save the whirr of insect wings stirred the silent watches of the night. The moon rose and gleamed across the water like a ray of hope, shedding its rays on the surrounding scene, lighting up the silent pool and the remains of the unfortunate buffalo: but still no tigress came.

And then I became somewhat tired of my long vigil, and took to dreaming and star-gazing. The lonely night in the solitude of the forest, beneath the deep blue sky studded with stars, and the pale moon floating in the infinite distance, lent itself to soliloquy. All was silent save for the whirr of countless insect wings, causing that continuous screech which only seems to deepen the silence of a tropic night.

I looked out at the moonlit hills, clad with spectral trees, and gazed up at the myriad stars in their courses, and wondered at the absurd presumption of our forefathers, who vainly imagined that those bright orbs, floating eternally serene in the dark vault above, influenced the ephemeral lives of us human beings in this little world, who would pass away into the Great Silence, leaving no trace, whilst those bright luminaries would shine on through the countless ages to come.

But I was rudely awakened from my dreams by a crashing noise in the jungle behind me, as of some

great creature breaking through the forest. Alert in an instant, I turned my head slowly towards the approaching sound, and saw a great bison emerge from the gloom of the forest. And even as he stepped forth from the shadows he halted and faced me, snorting affrightedly or angrily, and appearing to be of colossal proportions in the bright moonlight. I turned slowly round to get a shot at him, but he heard or saw the movement, and dashed back into the forest. There he stopped for some time in a thicket not far off, snorting and pawing up the ground in his rage, but he did not come near the water again. Bison have very keen scent, and on this occasion the animal doubtless either scented me or the kill. I doubt, however, if the latter would have frightened him, for a live buffalo would not do so. A friend of mine told me of a curious incident that occurred in the Kinwat Forest Reserve, where one of the buffaloes he had tied up for a tiger was gored to death by a bull bison that happened to come across the unfortunate creature. The moon was now right overhead, shining brightly down on the noisome carcase that lay below, and on the pool, now broken into silver ripples by the rising wind. I looked at my watch; it was three o'clock, and there was still some hope of the tigress coming. But I was doomed to disappointment, for she never came nearer than a spot some three hundred yards down the nullah, where next morning her tracks were found by the water's edge, and where she must have alarmed the khakur that barked in the evening.

At five o'clock the light of day began to appear

in the east, outlining the dark trees of the gloomy forest, and gradually spreading over the vault of heaven. The moon had already sunk, and the stars now paled and disappeared, whilst the rising sun dispersed the nocturnal vapours that had gathered in the glen. Then my men arrived, bringing refreshments, and we at once started off in pursuit of the bison that had visited me during the night, which we decided must be the one we had already met with thrice on the first day. The Korkus with me knew the jungle well, and could point out the best places for game, but they were not good trackers; so we lost the trail, and returned to camp by midday without further adventure.

When we got back I found my camp followers in a state of great excitement. They told me that a leopard had taken a dog from the village during the night, and had then come prowling round the camp and dragged away my bison skin, and eaten part of it. From the evidence of the mangled skin, I came to the conclusion that the marauder must be a hyena, although all the people who saw the animal declared, with Oriental exaggeration, that it was the biggest panther in Asia. That night they awoke me from pleasant dreams, with the information that the monster was approaching. So, taking my rifle, I sallied forth and crept down to the shadow of a large tree, whence a hyena could be seen standing about twenty yards off; but I missed the unsavoury beast. The following night I lent my sepoy orderly a gun, and he shot the creature when it came again —a deed he accomplished, greatly to his own satisfaction.

Next day we started with a fixed determination of coming to terms with the solitary bull bison which I had now seen four times. That animal haunted me, and disturbed my slumbers by night.

We left camp at five o'clock in the morning, and traversed the crests of the hills surrounding the wooded basin already mentioned. The sun rose and shone on the distant peaks, and gradually the warm rays dissipated the night mists that had gathered in the valleys. We descended from the hills, and were walking along, keeping a sharp look-out, when one of my men pointed out the bison about four hundred yards off, where he was sitting on the side of a hill, and looking in our direction. After a short conference, it was decided that I should try and get above him, making a long detour round the hills, whilst one of the men remained to watch the bull in case he should move off.

At length we arrived at a point whence we thought to have seen him, but he was not visible; so we went on to the end of the mountain, and found that he had moved farther down the valley, and was now walking along the side of a hill half a mile off. The bison stopped now and then to crop the grass, and through my field-glasses I could see him whisking the flies off his flanks with his great tail, and could distinguish a small bird sitting on his back. We watched him for half an hour, when he lay down under a tree.

The ground looked favourable for stalking; the hill-side was very steep and stony, but trees seemed to be sparsely scattered, so there should not be many dry leaves. My hopes rose high. Was this noble

beast, now viewed for the fifth time, after defying all my efforts to approach him, at last to come within range of my rifle?

I descended to the valley, and with difficulty scaled the hill-side, treading carefully, for the dry teak-leaves lay more thickly on the ground than we had expected.

The bison could now be seen about a hundred yards off, but he was looking at me. Suddenly he jumped up and made for the top of the hill, but paused for a moment on the summit to look back, and stood half-facing me. That moment sealed his fate; but it was impossible to see where the bullet struck him, and I gave him the second barrel as he topped the crest of the hill. On arriving at the top I saw the bison toiling along some distance ahead, evidently hard hit, with his haunches covered with blood—the result, no doubt, of my second shot, for the first one, which had brought him to his knees, had struck him somewhere about the chest or shoulder. No blood reached the ground. But finally I nearly came up with the wounded animal at the end of the hill, when he plunged down into a thickly-wooded ravine.

I waited on the summit of the hill, thinking he would emerge on the other side; but in a few moments saw a bison walking on the side of a hill on the other side of a broad, dry watercourse, in a direction quite different to that taken by the wounded one. Was this the wounded animal? If so, he must have gone up there at a tremendous pace; and this seemed almost impossible. This, however, did not strike me at the time, and I at once jumped

to the conclusion that he was the same, without taking into consideration the short time that had elapsed between my losing sight of the wounded one and seeing this one.

We gave chase. We followed that bison for over an hour, partly by tracking, and twice catching a glimpse of him. Then we concluded that it was a fresh animal. My guide was convinced on this point, and declared that this new bison was the larger of the two. Back we hurried, but could not find the wounded one; and to this day I am not satisfied as to whether there were two bulls or only one. I have no doubt my bison was mortally wounded. There was much blood on him, and we would have assuredly found him with the assistance of good trackers.

All this had been a long day's work, and we started back to camp in the afternoon. On the way back, we were going through some thick jungle, when an immense jet-black bull walked slowly across in front of me. I might have had an uncertain shot but did not wish to wound the beast. We followed a short distance; but the bull heard us, and dashed off, and I was too weary to give chase. Just then a small bull was seen standing under a tree about a hundred yards off, but he was not worth shooting. It was late in the afternoon when I arrived in camp, weary and footsore, for we had been many hours on foot under a blazing sun, over such rough ground that the soles were quite worn off my boots, and for the last few miles I was practically barefooted.

Next morning we went out to look for the

wounded bison. On the way to the place where he had last been seen, we saw a bull lying prone under a tree, and at first thought he was dead; but, looking through my binoculars, I saw him flick his tail, so started to stalk him. I arrived within thirty yards, when the great beast jumped up and stood facing me, and presenting a somewhat imposing appearance. A bullet in the chest made him turn, and another was fired as he bolted; but this last was apparently diverted from its course, as there were many branches between us. This was a new bison, of a darker colour than the one wounded the previous day, but not equal in size to the black one. We followed his tracks for over two miles, finding blood in small quantities smeared on the grass. I thought, and hoped, he was only slightly wounded; at any rate he was going very strong over bad ground, across nullahs and up and down hill. After another two miles, we saw from the tracks that the bull had been joined by two other bison, and we never saw him again. I then went to look for the one first wounded; but we toiled all day in vain, and in the evening returned to camp.

Doubtless, good trackers would have given better results during this expedition. After this second failure, I resolved to fire at no more bison unless they offered a fair broadside shot, for my ·500 express rifle was not sufficiently heavy for the game. Much has been said regarding the ferocity of the bison, but in my experience they are very mild-tempered animals to encounter; and sportsmen who have written regarding their fierceness and the danger of hunting them have doubtless made the

most of their imposing appearance and occasional blind rushes.

Next day I fired at a small stag sambhur, but missed him. It was a difficult shot, as only his head and neck were visible about a hundred and fifty yards off. I saw many stags during this expedition, but, with the exception of this one, all had cast their horns. As a general rule, sambhur appear to shed their horns by the end of March, although doubtless some few retain them all the year round. The antlers appear to be fully developed again by the middle of October.

On my last evening a piece of good luck brought the expedition to a close. We were walking along a hill, when we heard some bears on the slope below. Descending the hill in the direction of the sounds, I came upon three of these animals, playing or fighting within a few yards of me. Two dropped dead to a right and a left, but the third escaped into thick jungle before I could reload.

Next day, having collected men to carry my baggage down to the plains, we descended from the hills; and I marched back to Akola, shooting some black buck *en route*, and thence returned by *tonga* to Hingoli.

CHAPTER XV

TIGER-SHOOTING

Expedition after Tigers—Decrease of Game—Habitat of Animals—Nature of the Tiger—The Dangers of Tiger-shooting—Wounded Tigers—The Mahore Jungles—Virgin Ground—Camp at Kupti—My Shikaris—Bhima the Bhil—Work of Shikaris—Nuttoo Shikari—Chunder—The Pein Gunga—Haunts of Tigers—Sheik Farid's *Ziarat*—A necessary Ceremony—A Midnight Tragedy—Death of a Tigress—Tiger killed in Chichkora—Tigers and Porcupines—A Hindu Shrine—Denizens of the Jungle—Sacrifices to the Jungle Gods—Blue Bull shot—Tiger killed in the Dili Nullah—Spotted Deer—The Charm of the Jungle—The Voices of the Forest—Cunning Tigers—Ganeshpur—An Empty Beat—Escape of a Tiger near Lhona—Sunstroke—Tigress in the Beat—The Tiger again—Marked down—Death of the Lhona Tiger—March to Dhygaon—Tiger shot at C—— —Tiger wounded at Pipri—Panther killed—Following a wounded Tiger—Move to Burgaon—A Cannibal Tiger—Recalled to Hingoli.

It was not until March 1895 that I was able to make an organised expedition after tigers, when, having obtained several weeks' leave, I started to explore the jungles in the valley of the Pein Gunga. In these days when a constantly-growing network of railways is spread over the land, the wild beasts that formerly abounded in most parts of India are not as numerous as they used to be, and the sportsman has nowadays to go far in search of game, whilst large bags of tigers are seldom made. In addition to the iron roads, an increasing population, demanding an increased area of cultivation, has

further tended to drive the denizens of the jungles from their former haunts, and to confine them to limited regions where there still remains sufficient forest for their wanderings. It must not, however, be supposed that dense forests but seldom trodden by human footsteps are the most favourable to the well-being and increase of the *feræ naturæ*. In such secluded spots, indeed, the bison and elephant love to roam, far from the haunts of man, where no sounds save those of nature strike upon the ear, and where they can wander in peace over untrodden solitudes.

But the deer and the antelope prefer more cultivated regions—the former generally abounding in forests bordering on fields whose crops they can ravage at night, whilst the antelope frequent the cultivated plains. Consequently, the great beasts of prey follow their game to the borderlands of the habitations of man, where also they come to slay the cattle that exist in large herds in all Indian villages. The Hyderabad State of the Deccan is peculiarly suited to the presence of tigers. There are villages and cattle in abundance; and wooded hills, and perennial streams overgrown with evergreen bushes, that afford cool shade in the heat of the day.

In giving some account of tiger-shooting in the Nizam's dominions, I may begin by stating that I have no very wonderful hairbreadth escapes to relate. With all the romance that surrounds him, the ferocity and strength with which his nature is invested, and the narrow escapes that form the theme of most tiger-stories, it cannot be said that

the pursuit of the striped feline generally involves any great danger. On the contrary, from his safe perch on a tree or on the back of an elephant, the sportsman usually slays his tiger with an easy shot at a few yards' distance, without exposing himself to peril. I have known some sportsmen aver that they have shot many tigers on foot, and one Indian official informed me that he had killed eighty in this fashion. But such statements are to be received with caution; not that there is necessarily any great danger incurred in shooting tigers in this manner, but, at any rate on the ground over which I have shot, such a method of procedure would generally be impossible. A tiger seldom looks up in the trees, but he sees well ahead of him, and a man standing on the ground would seldom obtain a fair shot, even if he saw the tiger at all before it perceived him; for there are not often convenient trees or other places where the sportsman can remain in ambush until his game arrives upon the scene.

Nevertheless, as in the hunting of all dangerous animals, there must at times arise occasions of danger, when the sportsman must take his life in one hand and his rifle in the other, although, as a rule, there is less danger in shooting a tiger than in encountering a crusty-tempered bear on foot. But, however careful a sportsman may be, there must be times when a wounded tiger has to be followed up on foot; or an unwounded one, met with accidentally perhaps at a few yards distance, has to be shot in the same manner. For, although much has been said of the foolhardiness of following

up wounded tigers on foot, I do not see how otherwise they are to be brought to bag, and the so-called sportsman who has no stomach for such an undertaking should not go tiger-shooting. I have heard of a wounded tiger, thus left in the jungle, killing two unfortunate herd-boys who happened to pass by. For, although it is an error to suppose that a tiger when met with will attack at once, he becomes when wounded the most dangerous and terrible creature in the world; his charge is then irresistible, and he will kill any living thing that approaches him. It has only once been my fortune to meet with an unwounded tiger when on foot, although I have wandered over a large extent of country infested by these animals. But the tiger has a great dread of man, and avoids him instinctively, and therefore conceals himself immediately on the approach of a human being.

On 15th March I drove out forty miles over a rough road, travelling in a bullock-cart to a large town on the eastern confines of Berar. Next morning at daybreak I rode across country twenty-two miles, and encamped at the village of Kupti, on the far bank of the Pein Gunga, where my tents were pitched under the shadow of a fine banyan tree.

The surrounding jungles were situated in the Mahore district, at the base of the hill on which stands the fort of the same name. They have been shot over at intervals for many years, but continue to be infested by tigers. Mahore is the residence of a rajah who keeps an elephant which, together with the place of its habitation, is accounted sacred by the Hindus.

After leaving Mahore I passed to another district that had hitherto been unvisited by European sportsmen. There are still some considerable tracts of jungle in India that are virgin ground to the sportsman. For most men appear to follow year after year in the beaten tracks, where there is a certainty of finding some game, although not a great quantity. Personally, I prefer to strike out a new line for myself, and explore fresh country, where, even if one does not find much game, there is always something new and interesting to be discovered. This system involves more labour, which only adds a zest to the sport. For the country is new both to the sportsman and his shikaris. The natives inhabiting it have not been used to hunting tigers, and are not trained as beaters, like those in the well-known tracts which have been visited by generations of sportsmen. The haunts of the tigers have to be discovered, and the beats on new ground arranged. But all these difficulties only enhance the sport, which is not reduced to a mere mechanical operation, as it is on the well-known shooting-grounds. For in such frequented spots the exact haunts and habits of the tigers are known. The villagers have probably driven out many of these beasts in the same places year after year, for the haunt of a tiger is never long vacant. The shikaris know the exact line the animal will in all probability take; and all the sportsman has to do is to take up his position in the usual tree from which many tigers have been shot, and to pull the trigger when the beast is driven by. At Kupti I was met by my shikaris Bhima, Chunder, and Nuttoo, who deserve more than

a passing notice before I proceed further with this history, in which they are much concerned. Bhima was a fine old Bhil, of lofty stature. He does not reside with me, but lives here in his village of Kupti, where he tills his fields, and is said to occupy his leisure moments in committing dacoities or robberies in the surrounding country. Certainly he is a great rascal, but none the less useful when he accompanies me every hot weather in pursuit of tigers; for he is skilled in jungle-lore, and in the ways of the beasts, which never succeed in breaking out of a beat arranged by him. Indeed, if a tiger is marked down, and Bhima the Bhil is on the spot, the tiger is as good as dead. The other men do not like him, for he is grasping and overbearing, and they accuse him of cowardice. "For," say they, "when the Lhona tiger roared during the beat, did not his heart turn to water, and did he not seek refuge in the nearest tree?" Yet I know that he drove on that same Lhona tiger just ahead of him with a flourish of his spear as a herdsman drives his sheep, and he is always anxious to accompany me in pursuit of a wounded beast.

When he meets me he is accompanied by a horde of black retainers, selected from the inhabitants of his village, who fear him greatly, and do his bidding in all things. He is somewhat lazy—prone to sit at ease in camp when an excuse can be found for doing so, and make his attendant myrmidons do all the work until the tiger is found. Then he is unrivalled. With a spear over his shoulder he heads the procession of beaters to the ground, posts the stops, brings

on the beat, and invariably drives the tiger out at the right place.

And after a successful day he demands a goat, which is duly sacrificed, and the greater part of which he devours, throwing only the head and feet to his followers. The goat is washed down by copious libations of country spirituous liquor, so that Bhima is scarcely fit for work on the day following such midnight revelry.

I think most sportsmen will acknowledge that a great deal of their success in shooting—at least in the case of dangerous game such as tigers and panthers—is due to their shikaris. It is impossible for the sportsman to do everything himself, and arrange all the details of the hunt, especially in the hot weather. It is a physical impossibility for one man to visit all likely places for tigers within a considerable distance, say, seven miles of his camp; to tie up buffaloes as bait in all favourable spots; and then next day to go round and see where kills have taken place, and be in time to arrange one or more beats for the game. Therefore it is that one's shikaris contribute to success by their knowledge of the country and of the animal's habits, and, not least, by their ability to extract from the inhabitants the information that they are so loth to give.

Many sportsmen, indeed, confine their part of the operations to pulling the trigger when the tiger is driven past them, all the preparations beforehand being made by the shikaris. But this appears to me to reduce the sport to a mechanical operation; whilst, to my mind, almost the best part of it is

the searching for the animal's haunts, learning its habits, and arranging as far as possible the details of the hunt. The actual killing of the beast is not generally difficult, nor does it require any great skill, or usually involve any great danger.

One of my shikaris is old Nuttoo, who has been following his vocation for over forty years, and is now somewhat beyond his work. Although not gifted with much intelligence, he is honest,—a great point in his favour,—and he is brave to a fault, despising all wild beasts, and ready to confront the fiercest tiger with nothing but a stick in his hand. He is more useful after small game than in pursuit of tigers, and is never so happy as when up to his neck in a weed-choked pond with the duck falling all around him. Blear-eyed he is, and of unprepossessing appearance, but strong and lusty, and able to trudge along all day in the hottest sun. He is altogether too plucky, and I have frequently had to rate him severely for approaching tigers that were not yet dead; whilst on one occasion, when I shot a panther, he ran up to the beast while it was still struggling on the ground, and began to belabour it on the head with a stick. He has been clawed by a panther and ripped up by a pig, and has encountered many exciting adventures during his numerous expeditions to the jungle. On one occasion I was cautiously following a wounded tiger,—by myself, as I thought,—when suddenly I came upon the beast lying down close to me. I had just fired, thinking no one was near, when old Nuttoo's ugly face peered over my shoulder. He had been following silently a few yards behind to see the

sport, and also—so he said—to protect me. But it is doubtful if the only weapons he carried—an eight-foot spear and a long knife—would have been of much service in a tussle with the beast.

He is much addicted to the use of drugs, and is fond of a pannikin of rum, and holds high revel in the night when a tiger is slain.

My other shikari, Chunder, whose vocation is nominally that of a policeman, is younger and more energetic, and is one of the most intelligent natives I have met with. Although a man of humble calling and low caste, he possesses a great heart, and is honest and faithful to the master whose salt he eats. He it is who takes from me a route of the country it is proposed to traverse, and, accompanied by Nuttoo and Bhima the Bhil, sets forth early in the year to gather information for the coming hot-weather expedition. He is able to write, and talks many languages, and has a persuasive way with the dwellers in the jungle; so that he is able to find out the haunts of the tigers in hitherto unvisited tracts, and to write down the names of villages and a description of the supplies obtainable.

He hunts up the local shikaris, and enlists their services by a judicious distribution of rupees, thus smoothing away many difficulties, and clearing the path of many obstacles that lie in the way of the hunter of big game.

He is especially useful in a new country where the people are wild, and fear to give assistance or lend their services to a white man, never having seen one. It was Chunder who tamed wild Indru the Gond, a mighty hunter, who fled on my

approach, having heard that white men were much addicted to beating the natives. But the next year Indru was caught, and became one of my most devoted followers after receiving a supply of tobacco, rum, and rupees. Chunder is not less plucky than Nuttoo, although not so foolhardy; whilst he is even more keen on sport, and is delighted when the time comes to start on our annual expedition in pursuit of tigers.

He is, unlike most shikaris, very abstemious, and is not to be tempted by rum or any other liquor, but is glad to receive a plug of his master's tobacco. Nor is he useful only in his capacity as a shikari, but in the skinning of wild beasts and the preparation of their pelts he is unrivalled—a most useful accomplishment, and one that has secured the excellent preservation of some dozens of skins. My camp at Bhima's village of Kupti in March 1895 was pitched close to the river, whose stream, shrunk by the heat of the sun, flowed in a rocky bed, and wound its serpentine course through a broad valley, at times passing through stretches of field and meadowland, and anon shaded by deep forests of teak and bamboo. On either sunlit bank rose hills of considerable height, intersected by deep ravines containing cool, shady pools of water—ideal haunts for the tigers which infested them, secure retreats whence the animals could issue forth at night and ravage the herds of the surrounding villages. On the day after my arrival we took out four small buffaloes to tie up as bait in the Sheik Farid nullah, a long, broad valley, where the presence of tigers was reported. But, first of all, an important



CHUNDER AND NUTTO—SHIKARIS.

ceremony had to be performed. On a rocky eminence at the head of this valley, overlooking the surrounding country, is a Mahomedan *ziarat*, or tomb. Thither I repaired with my shikaris, and there a goat was slain in the orthodox manner, and a feast provided, at my expense, for all my followers and some twenty or thirty poor people of the neighbouring villages. The goat's throat was cut, and its blood was spilt on the rock above Sheik Farid's tomb. Without this ceremony, my superstitious followers assured me, I would have no success in shooting. "For," said they, "had not two *sahibs* been here a few days ago, and not seen the hair of a tiger, although they had beaten the whole jungle and burnt much of it? And why? Because they had neglected the sacrifice at Sheik Farid's *ziarat*."

At the conclusion of the feast we descended to the valley, and tied up our buffaloes near pools of water, on whose sandy margins could be seen the imprints of the paws of a large tigress, distinguishable from the square footprints of a tiger by their more oval form. By the time all this was done it was getting late, and we reached camp after dark somewhat tired from our long day's work, which had involved a tramp of many miles over rough ground.

Next morning I went up the valley soon after the sun rose, and found that one of the buffaloes had been killed and dragged into a thicket. A broken rope, a small pool of blood, and the trail of a heavy body through the grass,—these were the evidences of the tragedy that had taken place in the dead of

night. The power of the tigress was apparent from the fact that she had dragged her prey across a deep and broad ditch some six feet wide, with steep sides.

Towards mid-day, beaters were collected, and I took up a position some two hundred yards ahead of the kill. Whilst waiting for the game to come on, I found the scorching sun very trying, and the barrels of my rifle became so hot that it was difficult to hold them for any length of time. At length the beat commenced; the crowd of natives advanced, uttering loud cries and beating drums; a few peafowl flew by, and a small stag dashed out, stood for a moment close to me, and then plunged into the jungle. And then the tigress came rapidly, seemingly with sinuous movement, through the long grass. As she approached I fired, and she stumbled, but, quickly recovering herself, turned into a watercourse close by. Following the course of the nullah, I found her dead about twenty yards off. The bullet had struck her too far back to be immediately fatal; and these animals usually have sufficient vitality to rush for fifty yards or more after being shot through the heart or lungs.

For some days no more tigers made their appearance. Day after day we traversed the whole of the surrounding country for many miles in search of game, and towards the end of the week a buffalo was killed in the Chichkora valley, about four miles from camp. The tiger had dragged his prey up a small nullah leading into the main stream, and had there devoured the greater part of it; but we doubtless disturbed him, for he did not appear in

the beat. He was, however, a bold and voracious animal, for he returned that night and slew another buffalo.

This time I approached the kill with more caution. A crow was cawing vociferously on a neighbouring branch, and a few vultures were perched on the surrounding trees in expectation of a feast. By two o'clock some two hundred beaters were collected, and I took up my position in a tree overlooking a nullah, a short distance from the kill. At the first shout of the beaters an enormous tiger appeared, heavy with beef, walking lazily along in my direction. I fired too soon, and missed him, and he sprang forward with a roar so appalling that two small boys, perched on a tree not far off, fell to the ground in terror. The next instant the tiger dropped dead, for my second bullet struck him on the point of his shoulder, passed through the heart, and lodged under the skin on the other side. He was a huge beast, very heavy and fat, and was with difficulty carried on to the road, and thence conveyed to the camp in a bullock-cart. On the back of his neck were a number of suppurating punctures, from which I afterwards extracted several broken porcupine quills. Tigers and leopards seem to have rather a liking for porcupines, for I have frequently found the quills of these animals embedded in their paws.

After this success, it was now the turn of the Hindus to offer up a sacrifice to their jungle god. A short distance up the valley of Chichkora, where I shot this tiger, beside the narrow track trodden by the feet of many wild animals, stands a humble

Hindu shrine dedicated to the local deity, containing a red-painted stone, and having on its summit a ragged flag fluttering in the breeze. To this sacred spot my men took a goat I gave them, and cut its throat with due ceremony, spilling a little blood in front of the dilapidated wooden structure that formed the sacred edifice. Here, too, they hung up a foot of the sacrificial goat, which was carried back to camp and devoured. The path in Chichkora was interesting to see in the early morning, for it was always imprinted with the marks of many wild animals. Daily I observed the tracks of a panther, two hyenas, a porcupine, some four-horned antelope, and many smaller beasts, whilst sambhur and blue bull had crossed it in several places. Wild animals like to walk on a beaten track, and all these used to pass to and fro in the silent watches of the night.

It is strange what great importance my shikaris attached to the sacrifice of a goat to the local gods. They certainly believed in the efficacy of the offering, and were not influenced by the desire for the meat, for they frequently asked for a goat even when well supplied with venison. It is also a strange coincidence that such sacrifices were frequently followed by success—a fact that naturally strengthened the belief of the men in this manner of propitiating the jungle deities.

On one occasion a tiger passed close to a buffalo without killing it. As I could see from the tracks, he had walked up to within a few yards of the wretched beast, and stood there looking at it—a most unaccountable circumstance. My shikaris averred

that the jungle god had forbidden the tiger to kill, and that a goat must be sacrificed to appease the deity. I was of opinion that the beast had been hunted before, and was cunning in his generation, knowing the significance of a buffalo tied up by the leg. This tiger, however, proved to be a most blood-thirsty and rapacious animal. A goat was duly sacrificed, both Hindus and Mahomedans taking part in the heathen rites; and two days later the tiger killed the very buffalo at which he had turned up his nose, and followed this by killing four more before I brought him to bag.

After staying a fortnight at Kupti I moved my camp to Singhi, ten miles farther down the river, and there killed a large blue bull, and beat out two panthers, but did not get a shot at them. The blue bull is an antelope of bovine appearance, standing about fourteen hands at the withers. He is not generally worth shooting, except for the sake of his beef, whilst the trophies he carries in the shape of ten-inch horns are insignificant.

There being no tigers here, my camp was moved a few miles farther on to Pandri, and pitched under some lofty trees on the margin of the river, on the border of the Kinwat Forest Reserve, from which the spotted deer came down in herds to drink in the morning and evening. Tigers were fairly numerous, and were in the habit of nightly patrolling the forest roads and the banks of the stream, but they were difficult to mark down owing to the vast quantity of game in the vicinity, which afforded them an easy prey. It was some days before one of my buffaloes was killed and the marauder brought to bag. When

driven from his lair in the Dili nullah the tiger tried to break out to one side, but was driven back by a man who had been posted there for that purpose. He then trotted along towards me and sprang down into the dry bed of a watercourse a few yards off, where he stopped and turned his head, listening intently to the noise that pursued him. A bullet behind the shoulder caused him to spring forward with a roar, and another rolled him over. Still he attempted to rise, growling and gasping horribly the while, until another bullet terminated his troubles.

This tiger died harder than they usually do. In spite of all that has been said regarding the tenacity of life of the great cats, I have seldom experienced much difficulty in killing tigers. A bullet from a ·500 express rifle, weighing 440 grains and propelled by five drams of powder, lodged in any part of a tiger's body, except of course the extremities, is almost invariably fatal. If the tiger so wounded does not drop dead on the spot, he will not generally travel more than a hundred yards before collapsing.

After killing this last tiger I had a run of bad luck, for the beasts would not show themselves. But the camp was a very pleasant one, and for a time the pursuit of the spotted deer afforded some diversion from the hunting of impracticable tigers. In a way, the pursuit of the *chital*, or spotted deer, is the poetry of sport, although the game, if numerous, is easy to bring to bag. But then it takes one to the most beautiful scenery, to the park-like banks of broad rivers, where the trees form beautiful glades and the ground is carpeted with verdure.

It is pleasant indeed to wander at break of day

along the margin of the tortuous stream—to scan eagerly the banks that pen in broad reaches tinted by the rays of the rising sun, where the glassy sheen of the waters is broken only by the red and grey granite rocks that jut up through the surface. And as the light of day fills the forest and clears away the mists of night, spotted herds may be seen browsing in the distance—some standing on their hind-legs to pluck the leaves from the hanging branches, others cropping the dewy grass or drinking at the stream. And should you tread upon a dry stick, how they all instantly spring to attention, and then, preceded by the alarmed bark of the hinds, vanish like spectres in the shades of the forest, perhaps leaving their antlered leader on the ground, if your aim has been quick and true. But it is a sport that soon palls upon one; and, after securing a few good heads and dappled hides, I left the spotted deer in peace.

But in the forests where I sought these deer there is a charm beyond the desirability of the game, and the beauty of the scenery never palls. The jungle teems with animal life. It is possible that a tiger may be met with, bent upon an errand similar to that of the stalker; bison and blue bull may be seen, and the rough backs of crocodiles may appear like logs in the water; or a family of otters may be observed disporting themselves and chasing the fish.

And should the sportsman climb the neighbouring hills, that cast their long shadows down to the water's edge, he may find a sambhur stag—game more worthy of the rifle than the spotted one; or he may meet a

shaggy and crusty-tempered bear. And then—to rest on the hill-top and look down on the view below, a scene beautiful to behold. For miles the river winds its serpentine course through jungle-land and field, rushing turbulently through rock-pent channels, or flowing smoothly over a sandy bed. And from all sides resound the voices of the forest, where graceful forms can be distinguished moving in the glades below. The bark of the deer, the cry of the pea-fowl, the monotonous call of the *coël*, the Indian cuckoo,—all these and other sounds strike upon the ear, and gladden the solitude of the woods.

One evening I left my tent at Pandri, and crossed the river towards sunset. Deep in the solitude of the forest is a shady pool overhung with graceful bamboos, and surrounded by giant trees. Hither the beasts of the forest resort to slake their thirst; and here I took up my position in the branches of a *peepul* tree, to observe the animals as they came down to drink.

As the sun sank lower and lower, dark forms could be seen flitting about in the neighbouring glades, and soon a herd of spotted deer approached the water—among them a fine stag with branching antlers. They came along cautiously, stopping now and then to look and listen, or to browse on the low-hanging branches of the trees. But they were not game for me. They came quite close, and then I made a slight movement, and the deer looked up. A doe gave the warning bark of alarm, and in a moment all disappeared in the thicket.

Then a train of grey monkeys with black faces

came swinging from branch to branch; and it was ludicrous to observe the fear and caution with which they approached the water. A monkey would come down and almost reach the water's edge, and then dash back up a tree with a gesture of terror, although there was apparently nothing to alarm him. A gorgeous peacock came stalking over the dry leaves followed by a troop of hens, and a little four-horned antelope came forth on dainty footstep, and pushed his soft muzzle into the pellucid pool.

Then all disappeared; the sun sank behind the hills, and it became darker and darker until objects could with difficulty be distinguished. But hark! there is the sound of a soft but heavy tread, which at times ceases, and then comes on. Surely a tiger; for that velvet footfall is too heavy for the lithe panther, too even for the clumsy, shambling bear. Vainly I strove to pierce the darkness, but all was blotted out in the gloom of night. Scarcely even could I distinguish the glimmer of a solitary star reflected on the water. The great beast drank at the pool, and then passed on, close, but invisible in the shadow of the trees. And then the moon rose and shone on the silent pool, and caused the trees to cast fantastic shadows around, and I whistled for my trusty followers, and walked back in the moonlight across the silver river to my tent.

I lingered some days at this place, attracted more by the surroundings than by the hope of sport. For the tigers were very wary. A buffalo was killed one night, but the tiger left the place without eating any of the carcase, as though driven off by the ghost of his feline predecessor, whose bones lay bleaching in

the sun. Then a tigress and two cubs passed close by, and fled the haunted place, turning up their noses at my buffalo, no doubt preferring fat venison to somewhat lean beef; and then we concluded that it was time to leave.

Therefore I marched some miles down the river, making *en route* a good shot at a spotted stag on the far bank, and then turned off up a valley and pitched my camp under a tamarind-tree, where there had formerly been a village called Ganeshpur. About two miles farther up this valley, which was well watered by several streams, was the small village of Lhona, where a large tiger was said to have been carrying on extensive depredations for some time.

On the day of my arrival I went to explore a deep ravine, whose head was filled with bamboo jungle, about three miles from camp, and there found tracks of a large tiger and a tigress which had passed by in the night. We tied up three buffaloes in this ravine, where water was fairly plentiful. That night a great storm arose. The rain fell in torrents; the thunder reverberated among the hills, whose rocky eminences were lit up by frequent flashes of lightning.

In the morning the sky cleared somewhat, and the rain ceased falling; we went to look at the buffaloes, and found them untouched. But the big tiger had passed up the valley. His great footprints were visible in the bed of the nullah, and he had stopped at the water close to one of the buffaloes, in such a position that it seemed certain he must have seen it. Yet he had passed it by—an unaccountable circumstance. The shikaris would have it that the local deity had forbidden it to kill, and that a sacri-

fice must be made to propitiate the jungle god. As I have already remarked, this sacrifice of a goat was frequently followed by success, and on this occasion the jungle god was eventually appeased. Two days later, the tigress whose marks we had seen killed one of my buffaloes in a small nullah, but the beat was empty, for she had left her prey after eating her fill.

On the following day a kill was again reported at a distance of some six miles from camp. It was a scorching hot day, and it was three o'clock before the beaters arrived on the scene of action. I took up my position in a tree in the middle of the nullah, thus making a mistake, as was proved by subsequent events. The tiger, which had been lying in a pool of water, soon showed himself. The shikaris, who generally ascribe something peculiar to every tiger, said that this one was in the habit of lying in the water like a fish, with nothing but the tip of his tail showing above the surface! He walked rapidly along towards me through the long grass among the trees, that grew thickly on the side of the water-course. He was an immense beast, with massive chest and monstrous head surrounded by a fringe of long hair, and his light-yellow coat, faded apparently by age, shone golden in the strong sunlight. Already I counted him as mine. On he came, then stopped some twenty yards off behind a clump of trees. Then suddenly, as the beaters came on, he dashed up the bank of the ravine with a muttered growl and disappeared from view.

It was a great disappointment, but the loss of the tiger was due to my mistake in posting myself in

the nullah, with no command of the surrounding ground. Had I been on the bank above, the tiger would certainly have been killed, and I would have been saved many a long and anxious chase.

Farther up the glen we tried to beat the beast out again, but he broke to one side and crossed the mountains, going in the direction of the valley where he had refused my buffalo the first night. This tiger was a bold and voracious animal. Nothing daunted by being hunted, he, that same night, slew the buffalo which he had passed by before, and lay up beside his prey. The ground was open, and the tiger was disturbed before we were ready for the beat. He made off into some bamboo jungle, and I ran after him, hoping to get a shot, but only caught a glimpse of his stern going away through the thicket. I then put in the beaters, but the tiger broke back with a fierce roar, and made off in the direction whence he came, and we returned disappointed to camp.

But my unsuccessful efforts to bag this tiger only made me the more determined to persist in his pursuit. It should be a case of his cunning against mine, and I determined to remain a month on the ground if necessary. Next morning we went to look at the kill of the preceding day, and in the nullah found the fresh pugs of the monster. He had visited the kill during the night. Cocking my rifle, I crept cautiously towards the place. The tiger was not there, but the swollen carcase of the buffalo was floating in a pool of water, into which the tiger had evidently cast it, probably to preserve it from the vultures.

Then I tried to track the beast down in hopes of getting a shot, but we lost the tracks on hard ground. The month of April was now drawing to a close; the scorching wind was blowing in hot blasts through the valleys, and the hard work of the last few days had begun to tell on me. On my way back to camp this morning I was suddenly knocked over by the heat of the sun, and, being unable either to walk or to ride, had to send for a bullock-cart to take me back.

Next morning another buffalo was killed by the big tiger at the head of the same ravine. Although very weak and ill, I hoped to be able to ride to the place; so beaters were assembled, but I was attacked by a raging fever, and unable to move. Next day I went in a cart to the valley where the kill was, and was hoisted into a tree; but the tiger did not appear in the beat, during which I was kept alive by Bovril and brandy, and in the evening returned in an exhausted condition to the camp.

Two days later the tigress killed a buffalo in the same place. In the beat that ensued she was coming straight towards me, as I afterwards discovered from the tracks, when one of the natives posted in a tree foolishly made a noise and turned her up the hill; so she went off without showing herself to me. A few days later the big tiger came back once more, and killed another buffalo. My shikaris, in reporting this to me, did not tell me what I subsequently discovered, that they had disturbed the beast at his kill, and that he had made off. I was still very weak, and not able to travel far, except in a cart, so had all the trouble of going out to the place and

beating for nothing. But I determined to make one more effort to encompass the destruction of this tiger.

After the beat was over, I tracked him down for two miles into a deep ravine with precipitous sides, containing a pool of water in a basin hollowed out in the rocks. Here I tied up a buffalo, and returned to camp to await events. But other precautions were taken. Before daybreak the heights that crowned the valley were occupied by my shikaris, who had by this time become as intent as myself on the destruction of the tiger.

As the mists of night cleared away and the light of day filled the valleys, they saw, from the heights above, the tiger lying down beside the remains of the buffalo, on which he had gorged himself during the night. As the sun rose in the heavens and its rays sought the depths of the ravine, the tiger retired to rest in a thick patch of jungle bordering on the watercourse, and a messenger was sent to camp with the news.

It seemed now as if nothing but some unfortunate occurrence could avert the fate of the creature that had given me so long a chase. I went out in a bullock-cart to within a mile of the kill, and then with difficulty climbed up the rocky steep that overlooked the valley where the tiger lay, into which I descended again about five hundred yards beyond the kill, and posted myself in a narrow portion of the ravine, just beyond a thick clump of bamboos.

The whole country-side had collected to the beat, and a crowd of natives now mounted the hill-sides

and swarmed along the valley. The tiger soon gave notice of his presence, and a lusty roar, met by a responsive shout of the beaters, announced that he had tried to break out up the hill-side, but had been driven back. Again he climbed the precipitous slope, but one of my trusty men saw him coming up, and with fierce cries led the beaters on, who charged at the tiger like a body of infantry, and drove him grumbling down the hill-side.

And now the great beast came sullenly along, and emerged from the bamboos in front of me. I knew him at once by his massive hair-fringed head and light-yellow body. He stalked slowly and majestically for some distance, then suddenly dashed forward with a muttered growl, and as he passed I dropped him dead in his tracks with a bullet through the back.

Thus ended one of the best, and quite the most laborious, of all the tiger-hunts I have had. Next day, the skin having been partially dried, I marched to a large village, where, finding no tiger-cover, we only halted long enough to collect supplies. Thence I moved across a pass in the hills to new country, marching some twenty miles to the village of Dhygaon. This village was inhabited by refugees and their descendants, who had fled from Hingoli in 1857. The headman of the village had resided near the cantonment, and told me that he, with others, had left owing to the seizure by Government of all their cattle for purposes of transport during the sepoy war. From this place I moved to C—— where the presence of tigers was reported. That day several buffaloes were tied up, and next morning

one was found to have been killed in the hills above a small village some five miles from camp.

A long walk and a steep climb brought me to the place, and soon after the beat commenced a fine tiger walked out along the bank of the nullah in my direction. As I raised my rifle the tiger's eye caught the glint of the barrels, and with a roar he sprang forward into thick jungle. I fired two rapid shots, and feared that the beast had gone off unharmed, but, on following the trail, found a few spots of blood. The jungle was dangerously thick, but I followed on the tracks, keeping a sharp lookout, and a hundred yards farther came on the tiger lying stone-dead in a nullah. He was hit by one bullet far back in the stomach, and it was a lucky shot.

Next day I moved camp to the village of Pipri, a large and prosperous hamlet, surrounded by a considerable area of cultivation. Here I was so fortunate as to shoot another tiger on the day after my arrival. We had tied up a buffalo near a pool of water at the entrance to a broad valley filled with long grass and jungle, save in a few places where the grass had been burnt. On visiting the spot next morning we found that the buffalo had been killed.

The beat was an easy one, and soon a great brindled tiger walked out straight towards the tree in which I was sitting. As he came along I fired between his shoulders, but pulled the trigger too soon, for the bullet struck at a very acute angle and failed to penetrate, but cut a long wound in the animal's back. The tiger dashed on; my second bullet missed him, and he plunged into the long grass. I was thinking how best to follow him up

into grass up to my waist, slightly wounded as he was, when a fine panther walked down the nullah below me, and I shot it dead.

Descending from my tree, I followed up the wounded tiger. A small nullah intersected the grass in the valley, and up this nullah the great beast's tracks could be plainly seen. But to follow these tracks with long grass on either side, where any bush might conceal the beast, rendered terrible by his wound, seemed like courting almost certain destruction. I followed a hundred yards, and then left the grass, and skirted it by the bare, burnt ground that bordered the valley. A few hundred yards farther on, the nullah took a bend outwards, and left the grass for a score of paces. To this point I bent my steps, keeping my rifle ever ready, and alert to fire on the instant, for the tiger was at hand, and might rush forward at any moment. When I came to the bend of the nullah, here about two feet deep, the wounded beast appeared lying down in the shade of a tree within six feet of me. Fortunately, he had not heard my silent approach. He raised his head, and his green eyes flashed, and then I shot him through the heart.

This was a satisfactory termination to a somewhat dangerous adventure. Some people say wounded tigers should not be followed up on foot. That is, of course, absurd; for unless one has elephants, there is nothing else to be done. One cannot put in unarmed beaters to drive out a wounded animal, nor can such a beast be left in the jungle. Such procedure is not only unfair on the unfortunate tiger, but would also result in the death

of any unhappy persons who might pass near the stricken beast; whilst one would imagine that it would be repugnant to the feelings of any sportsman to abandon his game in such a manner.

It is easy and safe to shoot a tiger from a tree. But the essence of the sport begins when one has to follow a wounded one on foot. Dangerous sport certainly, but none the worse for that. Wounded tigers may be driven out by herds of cattle, but such are not always handy. Let those men stay at home —and small blame to them—who are not prepared to follow up wounded tigers. They should content themselves with less dangerous game, especially if they have families dependent on them.

But put a man in the jungle with a wounded tiger in front of him, and he is drawn after it, yard by yard, by an irresistible attraction. At each step, cautiously taken, but rendered bolder by long impunity, the sportsman may say to himself that he will go no farther, but leave the wounded creature until next day. But the blood draws him on to his fate or to his success, until the game is found—dead or alive.

There were no more tigers here, so my camp was soon moved on to Burgaon, a small village ten miles off, at the foot of the hills. Here we found a beautiful nullah, well watered and wooded, containing such cool haunts for tigers as I had not previously met with. In the nullah were tracks of a lame tiger, which appeared from the marks to have a broken foot. He had probably had an encounter with another of his species, which he had apparently slain and devoured; for I found unmistakable signs, including a claw, of his having indulged in cannibalism.

Several buffaloes were tied up, but none were killed although we remained some days at Burgaon. The jungle was rather thick, and the tiger always seemed to pass by my buffaloes without seeing them in his nocturnal prowlings. One day he was joined by another tiger and tigress, and, with any luck, all three would have been brought to bag. But, unfortunately, just as these had taken up their abode in the nullah, a trooper mounted on a camel arrived with an urgent letter recalling me to Hingoli, so I had to march back as fast as possible and leave these tigers behind.

CHAPTER XVI

TIGER-SHOOTING—(*continued*)

March to Jalna—Wild Cat and Pea-fowl—Blue Bull killed—The Lake of Lonar—Jalna—Aurungabad—Dowlatabad—Rosa—Ellora—Spearing a Panther—Return to Hingoli—Expedition after Tigers in 1896—Old Haunts—Ceremony at the *Ziarat*—Tigress shot and Panther missed—Lhona—Examining Kills—Fine Tiger killed at Lhona—Heathen Rites—March to Dhygaon—Wild Dog shot—Cholera—Run after a Tigress—Bear killed—Tigress and Cubs—Spearing a Cobra—At Burgaon again—Telingi Beaters—Tigress escapes—Beat for the Tigress—Flight of the Burghers of Burgaon—Tigress killed by Sepoys—Behaviour of Beaters—Return to Dhygaon—Hunt for the Patoda Tiger—The K—— River—Death of a Tiger and Tigress—The Patoda Tiger killed—His Stronghold—Tigress stalked and shot at Lhona—Buffalo mauled by Tigress—Tigers killing Bears.

EARLY in 1896 I received a temporary appointment on the staff of the officer commanding the Hyderabad Contingent, and accompanied him on a tour of inspection to Ellichpur, Jalna, and Aurungabad. The march of about ninety miles by road to Jalna was very pleasant. Starting every morning at six o'clock, we rode twelve or fourteen miles to our next camping-ground, and, after breakfast and my work were over, I used to take gun and rifle and go out shooting, thus keeping the larder well supplied with game. At one place I was beating for pea-fowl, when a great wild-cat walked out with a pea-chick in its mouth, so I shot the cat and got the chick as well. Near another village I killed a very large

blue bull with a good shot at about two hundred yards distance. My bullet struck him just behind the shoulder, but he went off at a gallop. Running on the tracks, which were plainly marked by great gouts of blood, I came up with the poor beast about half a mile farther on, and finished him off with another bullet. At the village of Saorgaon, one march out of Jalna, I shot a panther after a long chase; so a fair bag was made altogether during the expedition.

Whilst on the march we encamped near the lake of Lonar, about half-way between Hingoli and Jalna. This lake, the water of which is surcharged with various salts, lies at the bottom of an enormous circular basin, bearing the appearance of the crater of an extinct volcano. The lake in its basaltic basin presents a curious appearance from above. One descends to it by a steep, winding road, passing a perennial spring, the flow of which is said never to decrease even in the hottest season of the year. The lake swarmed with myriads of wild-fowl, but, having no boat, I only managed to shoot a few shoveller duck.

Between Lonar and Jalna we passed near the famous battlefield of Assaye, but unfortunately I had no time to visit it.

We stayed only a few days at Jalna, and I had no leisure to see much of the place, which was formerly a large cantonment garrisoned by a brigade of all arms, but is now occupied by only one infantry regiment of the Hyderabad Contingent.

From Jalna we rode in three marches to Aurungabad, where I remained a fortnight. It is a pleasant

and healthy station, garrisoned by cavalry, artillery, and infantry. The importance of this place and of Jalna will soon be enhanced, as a railway to them from Munmar is in course of construction, and will probably be completed before the close of the present year. The city of Aurungabad is of historic interest, having been built by Aurungzeb, the most powerful of the Great Moguls, in the seventeenth century. It contains the ruins of a fine palace, and the mausoleum of Aurungzeb's daughter, built in imitation of the celebrated Taj of Agra. There is also a remarkable aqueduct, made in the days of the Moguls, and so well constructed that it is now used for the cantonment water-supply. The neighbourhood of Aurungabad is rich in places of interest and antiquity. Whilst there I visited the fort of Dowlatabad—an apparently impregnable fortress, accessible only by an underground passage, that winds through the solid rock in the interior of a hill rising from the plains. At Rosa, near Dowlatabad, there is a pleasant resort, made use of by the officers of the Aurungabad cantonment. The celebrated caves of Ajunta and Ellora are also in this district. The Buddhist caves of Ajunta, which are about twenty-five in number, are situated in the province of Khandeish, and were hollowed out of the mountain-side by almost incredible labour. They are supposed to have been excavated in the eighth century. They contain a variety of fresco paintings and sculptures, which were described and copied by the late Captain Gill, a retired officer of the East India Company's Service, who resided here many years, and was well known in the district.

The ruined village of Ellora is about a dozen miles from Aurungabad, not far from Rosa. It has cave temples of immense size, excavated out of the side of a hill, and ornamented with Buddhist sculptures, including one great temple of elaborate design dedicated to Siva.

Whilst I was at Aurungabad, a panther, that had been caught in a trap in the neighbouring hills, was brought in and let loose on the open plain. To hunt this unfortunate creature a number of us were assembled, armed with spears, and started in pursuit of it, at a word from the master of the hunt. I could not get my horse near the beast, which was soon wounded by a spear-thrust from a native cavalry officer. It then trotted down a small nullah, where no one seemed to like to approach it, but at length the hapless animal mounted the bank, and was there done to death by many spear-thrusts. Altogether, it was not an edifying spectacle, and could scarcely be dignified by the name of sport, especially as the unfortunate panther must have been cowed and stiff after being confined in a cage for some twenty-four hours.

Towards the end of February I returned to Hingoli, and about a month later started again for the jungles in pursuit of tigers, and on the 25th March, accompanied by my youngest brother, Lieutenant A. R. Burton, rode out forty miles to Umerkher. It was a terribly hot ride, for I had to go on parade for some hours in the early morning, and was unable to leave cantonments until eleven o'clock, a time of day when the sun is blazing hot at this season of the year. Next day we went on to

the old camping-ground at Kupti, on the banks of the Pein Gunga, where old Bhima and his myrmidons met us. Here our tents were pitched under the great banyan-tree, whose innumerable tendrils hung down on every side, whilst the huge gnarled trunk and luxuriant foliage combined to form a dwelling-place most pleasant to the hunter. Pleasant to the eye, too, was the river bed close by, with its stretches of sand and shingle, and granite rocks, its deep pools and shrunken stream. For the season was an unusually hot one. The river, during the rainy season a rushing torrent some hundred yards across, was now shrunk to a silver thread, winding in and out among the granite rocks and boulders, occasionally forming a deep pool or shady reach, but fordable at most places both for man and beast.

The day after our arrival we went up to Sheik Farid's *ziarat*, where the customary ceremonies were performed, but it was not until the second day that a buffalo was killed. The place was in Chichkora, and an easy one to beat, so we made sure of getting the beast, if only it had not left the kill. The beat began about mid-day, and soon a tigress came along the bank of a small nullah towards my brother; but, seeing him, she turned into the nullah with an angry snarl, receiving a bullet in her flank as she went. The jungle was thick, and the tigress was out of sight in a moment. Shortly afterwards there was a crashing noise among the dry leaves, and a panther dashed out like a streak of light. He came with tremendous bounds across an open space in front of me, and I missed him with both barrels, whilst a parting shot from A. R. Burton was also ineffectual.

We then proceeded to follow up the wounded tigress. Some of the natives would have it that they had seen her going right away across the valley half a mile off, but we thought this exceedingly improbable. It was dangerous work, or might have been, for the grass was long and the jungle thick, whilst the nullah into which the tigress had gone had shelving banks, and turned and twisted every few yards. However, we came upon her lying stone-dead about fifty yards down the nullah, and it is surprising that she got so far, for the express bullet had entered behind one shoulder and come out through the other one in two places.

One evening at Kupti we went out to look for bears, and chased one for some distance, but could not come up with it. On another evening my brother knocked over a blue bull with a shot through the lungs. The animal's throat was being cut, when suddenly it jumped up and made off, running a long distance before it was shot again. Probably the cutting of the throat relieved the pressure of blood in the lungs, and so enabled the animal to breathe, giving it new vitality. Finding no more tigers at Kupti, we moved camp to Pandri, and thence up the valley to Lhona, where the tiger of the previous year had led me so long a chase.

This tiger's place had now been taken by another large tiger, which had been ravaging the herds for some months, according to the information given by the headman of the village. An inspection of the water-holes in the vicinity revealed the presence of a very large tiger and a tigress, the latter probably the one I had left here in 1895. On the day after

our arrival a buffalo was killed in the bamboo jungle at the head of the nullah near the Lhona village, and, when my brother went to look at the kill, he saw the tiger walking on the hill-side a few hundred yards off across the valley. We feared that the animal might have seen him and gone off, but the event proved that this was not the case.

It is a mistake to go and examine the kills before the sun is well above the horizon, as otherwise the tiger may be either still engaged on the carcase, or prowling about in the vicinity. But when, as is frequently the case, buffaloes are tied up seven or eight miles from camp, in jungles inaccessible to mounted men, one has to start very early, in order to get news in time for the collection of beaters and arrangement of the hunt.

We took up our positions, one on each side of the Lhona nullah, and beat down-hill, for at the head of the watercourse the rocks fell with a sheer drop, up which no tiger could scramble. The beat had scarcely commenced, when the tiger tried to break up the precipitous side of the hill, but he was turned back by a stop, and then took the path down the nullah towards the guns. He came along lazily, a huge brindled monster of a light colour, with long hair on the back of his neck, and a great ruff round his mighty head. He was, in fact, a magnified counterpart of the tiger I killed near here the previous year. As he crossed the nullah, fifty yards from me, I raised my rifle and covered his golden flank, but refrained from firing, as he was going straight towards A. R. Burton, who would get a close shot. On the beast went through the long grass,



A TIGER IN THE BEAT.

stopping once behind a clump of bamboos to listen to the noise of the beat. As he came along past my brother, the latter fired, but at that moment something alarmed the tiger; probably he caught sight of one of the stops, or the glint of the sun on the muzzle of the rifle. At any rate, he made a great spring in the air, threw up his tail and roared, and the bullet went under him. The next second I placed a shot behind his shoulder; my brother again fired, almost simultaneously, and the tiger subsided gasping into the grass, where he soon died.

This was the finest tiger it has been my fortune to meet with, both as regards size and colouring, and the amount of hair round his huge head. Measured in a straight line from point of nose to tip of tail, he was nine feet eight inches in length, the tail being three feet of this. I doubt if this length of body is often exceeded. This was a good beginning, and the shikaris celebrated it by sacrificing a goat to the local deity. The goat was taken to the spot where a sacred red stone marked the shrine of the jungle god, and was there anointed with country spirit, manufactured from the blossoms of the *mohwa* tree, on the head and back, and made to bow down three times to the image of stone. When the sacrificial goat had performed this obeisance his throat was cut, and in the evening it formed part of a feast provided for the occasion.

Without waiting to try and bag the tigress remaining in this valley, we moved on by rapid marches to Dhygaon, intending to look for tigers above C——, and in the bed of the K—— River.

On the way I shot a wild dog, one of a pack of four that were feeding on the carcase of an animal they had killed.

These ran out of the jungle, and made off on my approach, but one stopped about a hundred and fifty yards off to look round, and I shot it through the neck. One day a tigress killed one of our buffaloes at the place where I shot a tiger the year before, but the beat was empty. As cholera was raging in the villages in that direction, I withdrew my men from there, and confined my operations to a broad valley above the village of Patoda, and also tied up some buffaloes in the bed of the K—— River.

On the evening of our arrival at Dhygaon we went out to look for spotted deer, and were about half a mile from camp when a man on a barebacked pony arrived breathless with information that the shikaris had seen a tiger lying down in the jungle. Jumping onto the pony, I galloped into the camp, A. R. Burton running after me. There I found a guide waiting, and, after running the best part of a mile, we met Bhima and Chunder, who led me to the place where they had seen the tiger. The beast, however, heard us coming, and made off, giving me only a glimpse of her hind-quarters as she disappeared among the trees. It turned out that the animal was a tigress that had killed a cow the night before, and been driven off the kill by the villagers, who, with their usual apathy, did not tell us of the event.

Next day a kill was reported in the Patoda valley, but it subsequently appeared that the buffalo had not been killed, but had broken loose and gone away. The following day a buffalo was killed by

the big tiger in the same place, but the beat was empty, for the creature had left after eating his fill. We could not find this tiger, although we tied up for him day after day. Nor could we get a kill in the K—— River. One morning, after looking at the kills, I met a large bear in the river bed, and shot it through the body. Finding no more game at Dhygaon, we moved camp to Pipri, where there was a wandering tigress, but we could not get her to kill any of our buffaloes. Here we received information late one evening that a woodcutter had seen two small tiger-cubs lying in a hole among the rocks, but was afraid to take them, as the mother was prowling about. It was too late to go five miles to the place that night, but we started off at daybreak next morning, only to find that the tigress had been alarmed, and had carried off her cubs. That the woodcutter's tale was true, was proved by the fact that there were a great many tiger's hairs in the hole he pointed out to us in the rocks. On my way down the nullah this morning a large cobra suddenly appeared, making off between the boulders. Seizing a spear from Chunder, I ran it through the reptile, which then reared up with expanded hood, and stood hissing at me, looking very evil, until it was beaten to death with stones.

At Pipri we got nothing but two four-horned antelope, which I shot with a right and left; so we soon moved on to Burgaon, the village which had been my last camping-ground the preceding year, when I had left three tigers behind me on being recalled to Hingoli. This year was a very dry one, and the nullah, which had previously appeared such

a perfect haunt for tigers, now contained but a few shady places and little water. However, my shikaris, who had preceded me, reported that a tiger had roared at them when they went down to tie up buffaloes the evening before, and a man soon arrived with the intelligence that two of the buffaloes had been killed.

An inspection of the kills, which were not very far apart, seemed to indicate that the slaughter was the work of one animal. We had now left the Mahratta country and entered Telingana, where we found that the beaters were a cowardly lot. Directly the game was afoot, the beaters all made off, and the tigress broke back without showing herself in our direction. Next morning, on going to look at the kills, I found that the tigress had returned to the same carcase, and had dragged it down the bank of the nullah and across the water into some thick bamboo jungle on the far side.

A beat was soon organised, but again the Telingis would not obey orders. No sooner did the tigress break cover than the men posted as stops began jabbering all along the line, and the animal, finding herself surrounded, and having no outlet to escape by, charged the beaters fiercely. The burghers of Burgaon fled precipitately in all directions; and small blame to them, seeing that they were unarmed. The tigress then made for two sepoys, whom I had armed in case of accidents and posted to stiffen the line, and they were obliged to shoot her in self-defence, thus bringing the day's proceedings to a most unsatisfactory conclusion.

To give them their due, I have generally found

that the natives are plucky enough in pursuit of dangerous game. Most men would feel some trepidation at starting to drive out a tiger, armed with nothing more formidable than a stick or an axe. Yet there is seldom any difficulty in obtaining beaters for this purpose, and each man will do his duty for the paltry sum of four annas, or sixpence. It is certainly the beaters who usually face the danger, and not the sportsman, safely enseconced in a tree, and armed with the most deadly weapons that modern skill can produce. Without the assistance of the natives, the European hunter would obtain but little sport. From these remarks, it will be readily understood that such unarmed men should not be forced into unnecessary danger. They should not be put in to beat out a wounded tiger, or made to go where the sportsman would be unwilling to go himself. If a tiger is wounded, the sportsman should follow it by himself, or at least should take only those men who are provided with firearms and know how to use them.

Finding nothing more in the vicinity of Burgaon, where the presence of wild dogs rendered it unlikely that there would be much game, we decided to turn back in search of the Patoda tiger. The shikaris who went to tie up the buffaloes saw him lying in a pool of water, and he killed a buffalo that night. But he did not appear in the beat, although he had devoured a great portion of his prey. It seemed that the jungle there was too open,—for a tiger must have shade during the heat of the day,—and this animal had, doubtless, some cool haunt that we had not yet discovered. Two days later he slew

another buffalo; but he was lying up some distance from the kill, and Bhima disturbed him when posting the stops.

In the meantime we had been on the lookout for a tigress whose marks we had observed in the bed of the K—— River, about two miles from camp. The course of the river, now reduced to a few pools, lay in a deep bed, with rocky, precipitous sides, containing good cover of grass and jamun bushes, which grew in luxuriance on the water's edge, affording ample shade. In this place a kill was reported to have taken place one day when we returned from a long and unsuccessful hunt for the big tiger in the Patoda valley. Before the beat commenced, sundry roars announced that the game was afoot, and soon an animal, which I took for the expected tigress, came trotting out of the bushes straight towards my tree, and dropped dead with a bullet between neck and shoulder. Shortly after, there was further roaring up the nullah, and a tigress came bounding through the bushes, taking exactly the same line as her predecessor. I hit her in the flank, and she dashed on, receiving another bullet through the body from my brother; but she went another sixty yards or more, and there fell dead into a clump of jamun bushes, where we found her with a branch clenched tight between her jaws, torn from the bush in her dying agony. We then discovered that the first animal was a young tiger, which I judged to be about three years old; the two were much of a size, both under eight feet in length. This was one of the only two occasions on which I have found more than one tiger in a beat. During this hot season of the year they, evidently,

generally live singly; but in the following year I drove out a very old couple, which were shot by a friend who was with me.

A couple of days later we at last tracked the Patoda tiger down into a glen that appeared to be his dwelling-place; for old Bhima came suddenly upon him lying under a tree there, and we found the tracks of many days, whilst the presence of pea-fowl proclaimed that there was water in the glen. A buffalo was tied up; and next morning, being sure of a kill, we took beaters and repaired to the place, about seven miles from camp. The tiger's stronghold was a rocky and precipitous ravine filled with jungle, and having a pool of water lying at its head. The tiger had killed the buffalo and dragged it into the bushes. In the beat that followed, I soon saw the beast stalk out of the jungle two or three hundred yards from me. He turned into a small branch of the main nullah, leading past my brother's tree, and his fate was now assured. There was an interval of a quarter of an hour, during every moment of which I expected to hear a shot from the other gun; but it subsequently appeared that the tiger had lain down under some bushes, with his head turned up-hill towards a tree where a man had been posted as a stop. The beat was coming on, and the stop feared that the tiger would make a rush up the hill, so at length he clapped his hands to drive it on. Then the great beast rose and crossed the nullah, stalking majestically through the bushes towards me. Soon he emerged not ten yards from me, standing up with fearless mien, and looking indeed the monarch of the forest in his

mighty strength. I fired into his shoulder, and he spun round and round, seeming about to drop; but, suddenly recovering himself, he dashed past me into the long grass. As he reached the bank of the nullah his tail went straight up, and he pitched forward and disappeared. We walked up to the place, where we found him lying dead in the grass. Although lying dead close to us, it was some time before we could make him out, so closely were his form and colours blended with the surrounding grass and leaves; thus showing what danger there is in following a wounded animal.

And now that I had slain this beast, which we had hunted for so many days, my triumph was not unmingled with regret for the noble life that I had taken. He was a noble creature, and had probably wandered over these valleys for many years, as the place was far from the haunts of man, and had not been visited by other sportsmen.

The glen in which the tiger now lay dead was strewn with huge boulders, and contained giant trees—the growth of centuries. It had probably been a stronghold of tigers through countless ages. In the rainy seasons a waterfall had poured down the cliffs at the head of the ravine, where they fell sheer to the valley below, and had worn a basin deep in the living rock. From the rocks above this basin, now containing the only water in the glen, were suspended huge stalactites, which must have taken æons of time to form. Amid such surroundings the striped monarch of the forest had taken up his abode, and from this lair he had issued forth to seek his prey in the neighbouring valleys,

living his life, unmolesting and unmolested, until a bullet stretched him dead at the entrance to his den.

The day we shot this tiger, one of our buffaloes was killed by a tigress in a distant part of the same valley; but we could not find her or track her down. We then moved southwards, but, finding no game, and hearing that cholera was raging in the surrounding country, we returned to look for the tigress. She soon killed another buffalo, but went off as before, and her whereabouts could not be discovered.

After a day or two we moved our camp by easy marches to Lhona, where a tigress and two large cubs were reported to be located. The day after our arrival a buffalo was killed, but the beat was again empty. Owing to the great heat of the season, and consequent scarcity of water and cover, it was now a difficult matter to find a suitable spot in which to tie up our bait; for the jungle, being parched and shrivelled, afforded but little shade, and shade and water are essential for a tiger's lair. However, I tied up another buffalo in the same place, hoping that possibly the tigress might lie up there the following day.

Next morning, on going to look at the kill, I saw from the bank of the nullah a tigress and half-grown cub lying down near a pool of water, where lay the carcase of the buffalo they had slain and partially devoured. As there was little hope of the animals remaining in this unshaded spot, it had been arranged that I should shoot the tigress if met with. She rose, and my first bullet pierced

the skin of her armpit, inflicting a slight wound, whilst the second passed through both haunches as she made off into the thick bamboo jungle. In the meantime the cub ran a little way up the nullah, and stopped for some time; but I did not fire at it, having no wish to shoot cubs,—and this one was well-grown, and quite old enough to take care of itself.

The tigress now made a sudden rush in my direction, and I knocked her over again, whilst at the same time it appeared that the bones of her hind-legs gave way, for they had both been broken by the second bullet, and she disappeared among the bamboo undergrowth. Soon afterwards A. R. Burton, who had been in camp and heard the firing, joined me. The tigress now raised herself on her fore-paws, facing us, wounded unto death, and unable to charge—a sight horrible to behold, with the blood streaming from her gaping jaws. Another shot in the chest put the poor beast out of her misery. The whole thing was rather bungled, owing to my first shot having been a bad one. Had the bullet been a couple of inches higher, it would have dropped the tigress dead, and after that the bamboos prevented my obtaining a clear shot.

After this we had no more luck, although, on the way back, when we were encamped again at Kupti, there was a kill by a small tigress above the Sheik Farid valley. She tried to kill a very large buffalo the first night, but could not manage the job, and only succeeded in clawing and biting the unfortunate creature, which subsequently recovered. Next night we tied up a smaller animal, which she

killed, but we could not find her, and her tracks led right away over the hills towards Fort Mahore. On the hill not far distant from the fort we found the remains of a bear, which the local shikari informed us had been killed and devoured by a tiger. I have heard of similar occurrences on several occasions. In the Melghat I saw the skin of a bear which had been so badly mauled by a tiger that the villagers despatched it without difficulty; but it is doubtful if tigers would attack bears unless driven by extreme hunger. Towards the end of May we returned to Hingoli.

CHAPTER XVII

WILD ANIMALS—THE LAND OF THE GONDS

Bolarum—Shamiapett—Sunset on the Lake—Panthers near Bolarum—Magistrate's Work—Oriental Veracity—Crime at Hingoli—Panthers and Small Game—Four Days' Shooting—Run after a Bear—Bear missed—Bear killed, and Cubs caught—Death of Man-eating Tiger—Bear shot—She-Bear killed—Tiger and Tigress—Escape of a Tigress—Bear wounded—Fierce Animals—Panther attacks a Man—Officers killed by Wild Beasts—The Land of the Gonds—Habits of the Gonds—Description of their Country—Timidity of Aborigines—Indru the Gond—A *Terra Incognita*—Bad Water—Untruthfulness of the Gonds—Superstitions—The Gond Rajah—Reputed Man-eater—Aboriginal Hunters—The Rajah's Domain—A Jungle Elysium—Native Officials—Narrow Escape of the Rajah—Gond Customs and Superstitions—The Tiger God—Famine and Drought—Jubilee Rejoicings.

In July 1896 I went to Bolarum, the headquarters of the Hyderabad Contingent, and remained there four months. These months during the rains constitute perhaps the worst season of the year in India, for there is no shooting to be had, and, in a country of black cotton soil like that round Hingoli, one cannot leave the roads after heavy rain, as the ground is too soft. The soil round Bolarum, however, is hard, and the ground is good for riding at all times of the year; so we had some excellent sport, hunting foxes and jackals with a scratch pack of mongrels on the plains in the vicinity of the cantonment.

Bolarum is only six miles from Secunderabad, the largest military station in India; so life there is

very different from what it is in the small out-stations of the Hyderabad Contingent, where society is generally limited to some twenty Europeans.

There is very good snipe-shooting to be obtained in this part of the country from October to February, and doubtless there is also a fair quantity of other game in the neighbourhood. Sometimes tigers are found in the jungle about eight or ten miles out, whilst panthers are common all over the surrounding country, and occasionally even venture into the cantonment. The country is characterised by low rocky hills, clothed with bush jungle in which panthers abound; but they are very difficult to bring to bag, owing to the numbers of caves among the rocks and boulders. Whilst I was at Bolarum, one of these animals was killed in a field a few hundred yards from one of the cantonment bungalows, and another was seen on the road between our station and Secunderabad. Personally, I obtained no shooting during my stay at this place. On several occasions I went out to Shamiapett, where a bungalow belonging to the Contingent is situated on high ground overlooking an extensive lake. Here there were numbers of painted francolin in the surrounding jungle; but it was impossible to put them up in the dense bush, so I desisted from the attempt after a few hours. The bungalow was, however, a pleasant resort, and quite a change from the cantonment. In the evening I often sat in the verandah of the bungalow and looked out across the lake, the appearance of which at sunset was very beautiful.

The placid surface of the water was unrippled

even by the slightest zephyr, and unbroken save where the black rocks jutted up above the mirrored calm. In the far west the sun sank in a golden glory behind the distant hills, and coloured with crimson and green and gold the opaline clouds that floated in the infinite blue of the heavens. The light and the colours changed with every moment. Now the lake looked like a sea of molten gold, changing in hue from orange to yellow; the clouds were shot with crimson, with purple, and with gold, and gradually the leaden grey of night assumed its sway. But first a flood of crimson light was spread over the whole scene, turning the placid waters of the mere into a sea of blood, and the sky was all tinged with pink like the wing of a flamingo. And then the day died; the shades of night rapidly descended upon the scene, and the stars alone were reflected in the flood. And on the far shore of the lake a bittern called harshly among the rushes.

Towards the end of October I returned to Hingoli, to find work that fully occupied me; so had few opportunities for sport, but managed to bag a couple of panthers and a fair amount of small game before the end of the year. During the whole of this period, since the middle of 1894, I had been police magistrate of the cantonment—an appointment which involved some not very agreeable work, although crime was not very prevalent. But legal dealings with the natives of India, owing to their unmitigated untruthfulness, are not very pleasant. They would sometimes trump up cases, when crowds of false witnesses would appear on either side, who would lie in the most barefaced manner. The un-

truthful character of the natives of India renders it most difficult for a magistrate in the East to arrive at the truth. Occasionally, serious crimes were committed at Hingoli. In two cases that came under my cognisance, children were murdered by being thrown into wells, after being stripped of their paltry ornaments, valued perhaps at a few rupees, for the sake of which they were brutally slain. This is a common crime in India.

In February 1897 I managed to obtain four days' leave, and went out shooting with Colonel M——, commanding the cavalry regiment at Hingoli, he having kindly asked me to accompany him. The colonel's shikaris had sent in word that there were several tigers, including a man-eater, and innumerable bears in the jungle, about sixty miles off; so, having sent our camp on some days before, we started at six one morning, and arrived at our destination after a seven hours' ride across country. News was awaiting us in camp that a bear had been marked down some two miles from the village, so we at once proceeded to the place—a deep rocky ravine, overgrown with thick bushes. But Bruin would not wait for us to organise the beat, and made off over the brow of the hill, whilst I followed him as fast as the rocky nature of the ground would permit. After running about half a mile over the hill-tops, I descried the bear making off across a broad valley below me. Descending the hill I hurried after the beast, but could not catch him up, although I ran across the valley and up the height on the far side, arriving there in an exhausted and breathless condition.

About half a mile farther on, a crashing noise was heard among the thick bushes some two hundred yards off across a deep ravine; and soon a hairy black coat, seen now and then through the interstices of the thicket, proclaimed that Bruin was on the move again. A shot through the thick bushes was ineffectual; the bear disappeared over the brow of the hill, and we returned to camp as night was coming on. Next morning we organised a beat for two bears that were marked down. One came out close to me, and I missed it at a few yards distance in a most unaccountable manner. At least it appeared to be a miss; for although we followed the tracks a long way, neither blood nor bear could be found. In the meantime the colonel had followed up the other bear, and lost sight of it, but came across a big she-bear with two cubs; he shot the old one, and caught the two little ones, which were riding on her back. Two more bears were also seen, making it evident that we had discovered quite a stronghold of these animals. The country was most favourable for them. Our camp was almost surrounded by a range of rocky, jungle-covered hills, containing many deep and shady ravines, whilst the surrounding cultivated country supported a quantity of mango and mohwa trees, which afforded abundant food for the bears.

Next morning we found that a small buffalo had been killed in a thickly-overgrown nullah about a mile from camp, the place out of which we had driven the bears the preceding day. There were no marks to show whether the kill was by a tiger or a panther, but it seemed unlikely that a panther could

have dragged its prey away as this animal had done. After breakfast we went out to beat the place. Beneath me the nullah was choked with an almost impenetrable growth of thick bushes, but the ground around me was clear except for scattered trees. Soon after the beat commenced, such a roaring was heard as kept it no longer in doubt that the beast was a tiger, which had tried to break out of the ravine opposite to me, but was turned back. Soon the roars came closer, and presently an immense tiger broke from the jungle below, and dashed up the hill-side straight towards me. He was very angry, having been penned in by the beaters, who were even now all round me, although I had succeeded in getting most of them into the trees as they came up. The tiger staggered to my first shot, as he passed at a gallop; the second barrel caused him to pull up, whilst a third bullet knocked him over. Still he was not dead, and I had to put two more bullets in to finish him. I feared to have a wounded beast about, for the beaters were all round, a few being still on the ground; so it was advisable to pump in lead as long as the beast was alive. He was a very fine tiger, with the best coat of any I have shot, being of a dark, burnt sienna colour with deep black stripes. The villagers declared he was the man-eater which had killed and devoured some half dozen people. Certainly, the evidence on this point was less obscure than usual, but possibly the people may have fallen victims to panthers, of which there were several in the neighbourhood.

I subsequently heard, however, that the man-eating entirely ceased after the death of this tiger,

so it is highly probable that he was the culprit. Reports regarding man-eaters must be received with a certain amount of circumspection, for the natives of India are very prone to exaggeration in this respect, as in every other. The fact is that regular man-eaters are exceedingly rare, and in the whole of India it is doubtful if there are more than two or three such animals existing at any one period.

In the evening we went out after a bear in the same nullah where the tiger was killed. The noise of the firing and beat in the morning had not disturbed Bruin, and he was driven out near the colonel, who rolled him over with a shot through the body into the thick bushes at the bottom of the ravine where the tiger had been lying. Into this I followed the wounded animal, creeping along with some difficulty, sometimes on hands and knees, through the thick and thorny undergrowth.

At length the bear suddenly appeared, where he lay in a thicket sucking his paw a few feet off. He was breathing heavily, and raised his head as I came up, looking at me with beady eyes, and curling his lips like a snarling dog; but he could not get up, and was quickly despatched.

Next day an old she-bear and two nearly full-grown cubs were marked down near the same place. I was posted in the best position on the brow of a hill, but the animals ran past to one side, and I saw only the shaggy hair waving on the tops of their backs. Running to the edge of the ravine, I caught sight of the bears going across the valley, and dropped the big one with a good shot at about two hundred

yards distance. Not approving of the murder of cubs, I did not fire at the others, which were quite big enough to take care of themselves.

On returning to camp, we heard of a kill having occurred at a village about twelve miles off, and at once rode off to the place—a long, thickly-wooded valley. There were said to be a tiger and tigress in the beat, but we caught no glimpse of either, and had a long ride home through the dark night, which would have been a weary ride also, but that the colonel was such excellent company. Next morning a kill was reported at a place eight or nine miles off, in a different direction. On arriving on the scene of action we found that the animal had left the kill, and had been tracked down into a nullah at some distance. Soon after the beat began, a tigress broke cover near the colonel and dashed past him, answering his shot with a growl. After she had passed him, I fired at her at a distance of about a hundred and fifty yards, and she growled again, but tore on. We found one spot of blood, showing that the tigress had been touched, but she was probably only slightly grazed, for we never saw her again, although we searched the whole jungle.

Next day we beat a large extent of country for another tigress which had killed one of our buffaloes, but we could not find her, and the ground on these stony hills was too hard for tracking.

The following day we had to ride back sixty miles to Hingoli, but first of all we went to beat up a bear that had been marked down two or three miles from camp. Bruin came out along the hill-side below me, but was allowed to pass unmolested, as he

was making straight for the colonel, who was posted lower down. The latter got a snap-shot at the bear, which went off lame, and soon could be seen labouring painfully up the steep hill-side nearly a mile off, stopping to rest at intervals. There was blood on the tracks at first, but we had no time to follow the animal far, whilst the blood stopped after a time, and the ground was too hard to show any marks. Starting at mid-day, we rode back to Hingoli, and arrived there at seven o'clock in the evening, having had one of the pleasantest short trips in my experience.

The animals in these jungles appeared to be unusually fierce. The colonel went there to shoot on more than one occasion subsequent to this expedition, and shot several tigers and bears. One tigress, which had not been wounded, mauled two of his beaters, whilst one of the bears he killed charged at sight. A panther also kept up the reputation of his species for ferocity. On being driven from the jungle he caught sight of a native officer, who was posted in a tree to see the sport. The panther at once made for him, sprang up the tree, and seized him by the arm, and was with difficulty got rid of. The man was severely bitten and clawed, but, fortunately, eventually recovered. The wounds inflicted by these animals are frequently fatal, owing to the putrid matter adhering round the bases of the teeth and claws, and many sportsmen have lost their lives from slight wounds. Among others, a number of officers of the Hyderabad Contingent have been slain by wild beasts. The force has generally had some keen sportsmen among the

officers, so it is not surprising that some have been killed.

In 18— Lieutenant Doig was seized by a tiger, and died in a few days, although he was only slightly wounded. In 1882 Captain Whistler was terribly mauled by a wounded tiger near Asirgarh Fort, and succumbed to his wounds. His sepoy orderly behaved most pluckily on this occasion, running the tiger through with a spear whilst it was on his master's body. In 1893 Lieutenant Harries died of wounds inflicted by a panther near Hingoli, and in the following year Lieutenant Sexton, when out with a shooting-party in the Godavery jungles, was charged by a wounded tigress, which seized him by the shoulder and inflicted wounds of which he died in the course of a couple of days.

Before this short expedition I had already sent Bhima with Chunder and Nuttoo to explore some new country beyond the ground over which I had shot in previous years, and before the end of February they returned with favourable accounts of the presence of tigers in the Gond country, which lay adjacent to my old shooting-grounds. Before giving an account of my expedition after tigers in 1897, I propose to give some description of the country and people, which were new to me. The district I happened upon was an extensive forest region, unvisited by Europeans during the past half century, where the sole inhabitants of the small villages scattered in the wilderness were the aboriginal Gonds. These people, of whom an interesting account is given by Forsyth in his *Highlands of Central India*, inhabit various tracts of country be-

tween the Godavery and Nerbudda rivers, where they live principally in forest and mountainous regions.

In the part of the country I visited, where water is scarce and streams are not perennial, the people appear to wander considerably, frequently changing their habitations with the seasons, as is testified by the numerous remains of deserted villages met with in the forest. The soil is poor, and will not yield for many years the scanty crops required to support the Gonds, so that they are obliged to frequently make new clearings in the forest for purposes of cultivation. These clearings are made by cutting down trees, which serve to build their huts with, whilst the ashes of the burnt refuse fertilise the ground. When the ground is exhausted, the process is repeated elsewhere; and this destructive plan, carried on through countless years, has led to a considerable depletion of the forest region.

The higher uplands are for the most part destitute of water in the hot season, but contain small villages, which are inhabited at other periods of the year. In the rainy season the abundant grass affords limitless grazing to the large herds of cattle belonging to the wandering tribes of Banjaras, or gipsies, who take up their temporary abode on the higher plateaux. But in the month of March, when I visited this country, the hills were burnt and bare. No refreshing streams of water flowed down the burning rocks, no spot of green relieved the desolation of the arid waste; and both man and beast had fled to the lower valleys, where there still remained sufficient water to support life.

Thither the attendant tigers had followed the

flocks, so my operations were confined to the wooded plains, the shady beds of rivers, and the cool ravines, where game might be met with. Considerable difficulties had to be encountered. No grain for men and horses was obtainable in this desolate land, especially in this famine year, save in small quantities and at rare intervals in the larger villages; so I had to carry nearly all the supplies that were required—no small undertaking, seeing that there were in my camp some thirty human beings, in addition to many horses, camels, and bullocks.

Moreover, the half-wild Gonds were at first timid, and difficult to approach. My shikaris, who had preceded me to explore the land, declared that, if they went to the door of a Gond's hut, the occupant would escape by the back of the house; if they went to both front and back, he would climb out through the roof. This was, doubtless, exaggerating matters, and I soon discovered that the people were amenable to rupees and reason, especially when we had enlisted Indru's services. Indru the Gond, the old hunter whose acquaintance I had made the previous year when shooting on the confines of this forest tract. This ancient man appeared to have great influence among his fellow-tribesmen, so I kept him in my camp during my sojourn in his country. He must have been at least seventy years old, and age and infirmity rendered him somewhat beyond his work as a hunter, but he was able to give me much useful information, and to make use of his extensive influence with the others of his tribe. He had hunted these jungles for many years; had slain many wild beasts with his rusty matchlock; and

among other adventures had been engaged in an encounter with a bison, which had inflicted a severe wound on the right side of his body.

Leaving behind us the more civilised country, where we had been shooting tigers during the past fortnight, we entered this *terra incognita*, and the first day marched fourteen miles through the forest to a small hamlet built at the foot of the hills. Here the only water in the vicinity was contained in a shallow muddy pool below the village; but one cannot be particular under such circumstances, and we managed to make it drinkable by boiling and filtering. The hamlet contained only four inhabitants, whom I found very willing to give assistance in collecting fodder for the horses and cattle, although no reliable information could be extracted from them regarding the game to be obtained in the country.

The native of India is not generally remarkable for veracity, but, of all liars I have met with in the East, the Gond is the most persistent, though not the most skilful. On one occasion we were encamped at a small village in the heart of the jungle. The headman was questioned as to whether there was any game in the vicinity. He swore by all his gods (which were many, and visible) that no wild beast of any kind inhabited the surrounding forest, declaring, moreover, that there was no water within a radius of eight miles, with the exception of the small pool from which the village supply was drawn. Knowing the truthful character of the Gonds, I did not take the man at his word, but went out and shot a four-horned antelope within half a mile of

camp, whilst in the valley below was found a stream of running water. Next morning I observed the tracks of a tigress and cubs on the road close to the village, where they had walked by when prowling in the night. Perhaps the villagers feared that we would discover these animals and require their assistance in shooting them, if they gave us any information; but on few occasions, even when there appeared to be no object in lying, have I known a Gond speak the truth.

My shikaris had told me that I must obtain the assistance of the Gond rajah, who lived in a village some fifteen miles farther on, in the heart of the forest; so next day we moved on and encamped at a small hamlet in the rajah's domain. My men were exceedingly superstitious in ascribing power over tigers to the Gonds, who regard these animals as their deities. The Gonds, they assured me, could by magic rites close the jaws of the tigers, and so prevent them from killing the buffaloes which were tied up as bait. Moreover, they could render my shooting ineffective by turning aside the bullets fired at tigers. Therefore it was necessary to propitiate the King of the Gonds, in order that he might be induced to use his influence with both men and tigers. On my arrival in camp a mounted orderly was despatched to the monarch, with a request that he would do me the honour of paying me a visit in the evening. At five o'clock he arrived in a bullock-cart, accompanied by a horde of retainers, one of whom bore a muzzle-loading gun belonging to his master. I had expected to see a savage with but little clothing on in front, and less behind; but was

agreeably surprised to meet a well-dressed, quiet-spoken man, pock-marked, with only one eye, and exceedingly nervous, for he had but seldom seen and never spoken to Europeans. Our interview was satisfactory, for he promised to render me all the assistance in his power to aid me in the pursuit of tigers, and placed the services of all his people at my disposal.

He informed me that there were several tigers in the vicinity of his village, as we had already discovered from the numerous marks in the watercourses within a few miles of camp. A tiger had killed and, it was said, eaten a man about two months previous to my arrival, and report had, with Oriental exaggeration, magnified this beast into a man-eater that had slain and devoured twenty-five people; so my servants were in a state of considerable alarm. Late in the evening a great uproar arose in camp, with shrieks of "Tiger! tiger!" I feared that a man had been carried off, so ran out of my tent with a loaded rifle; but it turned out to be only a false alarm, caused by the nervous imagination and groundless fears of one of Bhima's followers, who had seen a man squatting by a pool of water close to camp, and mistaken him for a tiger, the man having imitated the growl of one of those animals on purpose to frighten his friend. The forest here was of vast extent, but wild animals did not appear to be very numerous. No doubt the Gond hunters keep the game down, and the small extent of cultivation would further account for the paucity of wild beasts; for it is not in dense forests, far from the habitations of man, that wild animals exist in great numbers, but rather in those



THE RAJAH'S DOMAIN.

wooded regions that border on extensive tracts of cultivation.

The Gonds are nearly all hunters, and are dependent in great measure for their livelihood on the animals they kill. The morning after my arrival, when inspecting the nullahs for tracks of tigers, I found ambushes constructed near every pool of water, where the hunters concealed themselves to shoot the wild animals that came down to drink in the evening; and whilst I was at this camping-ground a fine bull bison was shot by one of the Gonds of the village. Under one of the platforms, built in a tree as a place of concealment for the hunter, was hung the skin of a monkey filled with sand, placed there as a sort of fetish to propitiate the jungle god in favour of the occupants of the ambush.

Two days later we moved camp a couple of miles to the rajah's village. This village, the rajah informed me, had formerly been a large and prosperous town, containing some six thousand houses, but its population was now reduced to about a hundred and fifty inhabitants,—whether by famine, pestilence, or oppression it is impossible to say, but probably by a combination of all three evils.

The rajah's domain stood on the shores of an extensive lake, forming one of the fairest scenes that it has been my fortune to behold. On approaching the northern shore of the lake, I rode up a high embankment which penned in the glassy waters, now somewhat shrunken by the heat of the tropic sun. Myriads of wild-fowl were in sight, clustered upon the lake, or winging their flight over its waters, and

some crocodiles were basking on a green spit of land that jutted out into the mere. The lake was bordered by giant trees—tamarind and banyan and mango—and was set round with green meadows, where numerous herds of cattle were at pasture. Below the embankment lay stretches of bright emerald rice-fields, interspersed with tracts of jungle. On the far shore stood some grey, ruined temples, fashioned from stone by long-forgotten hands, and now fast crumbling away into dust. Beyond these temples rose the turreted walls of a fort, black with age, nestling amid a leafy canopy of tamarind and banyan trees, whilst the purpling hills formed a background to the whole. It was indeed an attractive spot; and I have often thought how pleasant it would be to settle down there, and live in the heart of the jungle, far from the turmoil and trouble of the outer world, with no other companions than the wild men and wild beasts.

The rajah resided in the fort, which he told me was five hundred years old, and had formed a stronghold of his predecessors for many generations during the troublous times of the Middle Ages. The building was now but a shattered ruin, and the rajah received me in a small house which he had built within the precincts of the fort. This monarch's title did not carry with it any power except a moral influence over the Gonds of his tribe. He was subject to the ruler of the native state in which he resided, and was, equally with other natives, liable to the oppression of the civil authorities. Whilst I was at his village, the *taluqdar* of the district, an official of high standing, visited the domain.

A day or two before his arrival, it was noticeable that most of the herds of cattle and goats had disappeared. On inquiry, the information was elicited that the villagers had hidden their flocks for fear of depredations by the *taluqdar's* followers, who pass over the country like a flight of locusts, taking toll of the miserable inhabitants wherever they go. At one place where I encamped, the villagers had been directed to give me no supplies or assistance whatever, having had orders to that effect from the *taluqdar*, who was himself by way of being a sportsman, and wished to prevent others obtaining sport. The unfortunate villagers found themselves between the devil and the deep sea, for they feared the wrath of the *taluqdar* if I remained in the district, whilst they could not force me to go. So, to save them, I left their village and moved into another district. In this same division I was informed that the headman of a village had been removed from his post for having taken the cards of a sportsman who proposed to visit the place, and sent his cards for the information of other travellers. On inquiring why the man did not go to the seat of government and lodge a complaint, we were informed that, if he attempted to do so, his throat would probably be cut on the way. Such is government in native states where native officials are employed; and those who would advocate the employment of native officials in British territory would do well to examine the actions of such men in the native states of India. Why is it that the natives themselves invariably prefer to go before an Englishman in a court of law or justice? Because they trust in the integrity of the white man, and

know full well that those of their own kind are generally corrupt and untrustworthy.

One day when we beat out and shot a tiger, the Gond potentate followed us to see the sport, and for his trouble was nearly caught by the tiger. The beast was a very fierce one. When driven out he walked about in the beat seeking whom he might devour; with a stroke of his mighty paw he tore down a waist-cloth that was hung on a bush to turn him, and then came down into the nullah below me, where I shot him through the body. He rushed off, roaring fiercely, and disappeared in a patch of grass, where he presently died. In the meantime the rajah had appeared on the scene, all unconscious of danger, riding on a pony a hundred yards off; and he was only induced to remain at a distance by the use of sundry objurgatory phrases, more forcible than polite. The tiger was soon found lying dead in the grass; but he must have lived some minutes after being hit, and would doubtless have slain anyone who was rash enough to approach him.

The Gonds have some curious customs, showing the respect in which they hold the mighty beasts of prey that inhabit their forests. Whenever a tiger is killed, the ladies of the village to which the dead animal is brought assemble around it and do obeisance, bringing their children to *salaam* to it, and placing a small copper coin in front of the monster's jaws or on his striped carcase. At one village near our camp a panther had lately entered a hut, and dragged a Gond woman out by the leg. The beast, on being driven off, rushed into another hut and, seizing an eight-year-old boy by the throat, carried

him off and devoured him. This tragedy occurred about ten days before our arrival; but my shikaris said that it was no use looking for the animal, as it had left the neighbourhood, having been driven off by the incantations of the Gonds. These people, when a tiger or panther has been doing much damage to themselves or their flocks, sacrifice a bullock to the tiger god, and perform various rites and ceremonies to invoke his aid. On the night of the performance of these rites, the god of the Gonds, represented by a white tiger, perambulates the surrounding jungles and drives off the beast of prey that has been committing the depredations. In all this my shikaris, themselves orthodox Hindus, firmly believe, ascribing great power over tigers to the Gonds, and they declared that, on the morning after the performance of these ceremonies, the footprints of the white tiger could be seen. The rajah proved of great assistance to me in my further travels. I left his domain with great regret, and on parting he sent me a goat and a fowl as a sign of his goodwill, and expressed his thanks to me for ridding the country of the tigers that had been decimating his flocks, whilst I presented him with a small tent to which he had taken a fancy.

This year of 1897 was one of great drought, and was marked by widespread famine and distress. In parts of Berar and the Nizam's dominions the scarcity was very acutely felt, but in the regions through which I passed during my shooting expedition the people appeared to have a sufficient store of grain to support life, when eked out with the herbs and roots which they collected in the jungle. Towards

the end of May the effects of long drought and famine began to make themselves evident in the Hingoli district, and hundreds of starving and emaciated people, mostly old men, women and children, crowded into the cantonment, presenting a most pitiable spectacle. I managed to organise a local relief with the assistance of other officers, and about a hundred people daily assembled in front of my bungalow to receive a measure of grain, for which each of them had received a ticket. Later on, a considerable relief-work was authorised by Government, which kept the unfortunate starvelings alive until the welcome rain arrived, and a fall in prices relieved their most pressing wants. Some of the richer natives were most charitable, and daily distributed food to the famishing people; but the grain-dealers, on the whole, evinced their usual greedy spirit, and made corners in food-stuffs, thus keeping the prices of the necessaries of life up to starvation rates.

Before the end of the hot season there was a great dearth of water in cantonments, all the wells and both the lakes being dry, whilst only a small quantity was left in the bed of the Khair River, where holes had to be dug deep in the bed of the stream before water could be obtained.

It was during this famine time that the Queen's Jubilee was celebrated. In honour of the occasion sixty guns were fired in the morning, and at night the whole place was illuminated. Also food was provided for many thousands of poor people, so that the effect of the celebration reached the lowest strata of the populace.

CHAPTER XVIII

TIGER-SHOOTING

Expedition after Tigers in 1897—Camp at Kupti again—Effect of Drought—A Useless Beat—Tigress in Chichkora—Narrow Escape of Nuttoo—Spotted Deer-shooting—Tigress shot above Lhona—Empty Beat—Eluding the Forest Guards—A Tiger killed—Young Panther shot—Death of a Tigress—Horse attacked by Colic—Tiger killed above C—— —Tigers in the K—— River—Camp at S—— —Ten Blank Days—Lakes, Game, and Wild-fowl—Tigress shot—I miss a Tigress—A Fruitless Night Watch—Death of a Tiger—Tiger shot at K—— —Gond Women and Tiger—A Cunning Tigress—March across the Mountains—Old Tiger and Tigress killed—Another Tiger shot—Tiger killed at S——— —Our Last Tiger—Game Preservation—The Killing of Tiger Cubs—The Length of Tigers.

SINCE my return from my shooting expedition in 1896 I had been looking forward to the time when I would be enabled to revisit the jungles now known to me so well, and also to explore those new regions inhabited by the Gonds, and described in the previous chapter. To those who have to pass the greater part of their lives in exile in the East, the sport obtainable in Indian jungles affords a compensatory advantage for the ills that have to be undergone in this distant land; and the hot weather, with its scorching winds and blazing sun, dreaded by most Europeans, is welcome to the sportsman, for it is then that the wild animals can be pursued with some hope of success.

At other seasons of the year the heavy jungles are very unhealthy, and are so overgrown with dank undergrowth that one might seek for game in vain. But in the hot weather the leaves have fallen from the trees; the grass has been burnt or is dried up, and the thick forest of the cold season is transformed into a comparatively bare tract, whilst the limited amount of water confines the wild animals to certain tracts, and obliges them to resort to certain pools to slake their thirst.

Early in March I made all arrangements for the expedition, and on the 6th of that month rode out forty miles from Hingoli, taking with me my brother A. R. Burton, and S—— of the Royal Artillery. Next morning we rode on twenty-two miles to my camping-ground on the river bank at Kupti, under the old banyan-tree, where the tents had been pitched the two previous years, close to the tiger-haunted valleys I now knew so well. Here we were met by the old Bhima the Bhil with smiling countenance, who informed us that there had been several tigers in the old places, but that, as far as he knew, there was only one left.

The dryness of this famine year, and consequent sparseness of jungle and scarcity of water, had driven the tigers to seek the cooler shades of the great rivers, where they could find cover and water in abundance. The difference in the appearance of the jungle now and two years previously was most marked. The Pein Gunga contained, even now early in March, less water than there had been in it at the end of May 1895, whilst there were but few pools left in the Chichkora and the Sheik Farid

valley, and the jungle was already burnt and bare.

Soon after our arrival in camp, one of my shikaris came in with a report that a buffalo had been killed in the Sheik Farid valley, about three miles from camp. The usual ceremonies at the *ziarat* on the mountain-top had already been performed by our men, so there was no need to go all that distance to attend the heathen rites. We soon started off to beat for the animal—evidently a tigress, from the pugs, which I think were recognisable as those of one left the previous year; but, although we beat a large part of the valley, the game could not be found.

When the beat was over, I went up Chichkora with Bhima to tie up more buffaloes, and there found marks of a tigress—probably the same one—which killed one of our animals that night. By twelve o'clock next day we were in our places, and soon after the beat commenced a tigress walked up a narrow nullah far below me, and stopped about forty yards off, turning her green eyes upon me. Then, as she glanced away, I raised my rifle and fired, knocking her backward onto her haunches, and she turned and rushed back down the nullah without uttering a sound. We were soon on her tracks, and found much blood and a piece of a canine tooth, showing that she had been hit in the mouth. The nullah was deep and narrow, with shelving banks overgrown with thick bushes and grass, where she might be in wait for her foes; so the sport was somewhat dangerous. Then S—— and I crossed the nullah on the blood tracks, leaving A. R. Burton to

guard the farther bank; and I looked and saw the beast lying down, apparently dead, within five yards of us. But she was very much alive, for suddenly she jumped up and made off, followed by a useless bullet from my rifle. It was fortunate that she did not charge, or one of us would probably have been killed. Then we climbed the bank, intending to get round the tigress from above, and were shortly joined by my brother, when suddenly the fearless Nuttoo appeared on the scene opposite to us, brandishing a stick, and breathing defiance to all the tigers in Asia. The tigress accepted the challenge, and with a coughing roar charged the old man, who was nearly paying the penalty of his temerity with his life, for our combined fire only turned the enraged monster when she was a couple of paces from him. Nuttoo never flinched, but stood there with upraised stick, ready to hit the beast on the head. After getting back into the nullah, the tigress turned along by the bank and lay down and died, a few yards farther up. My first shot had knocked out some of the teeth and lodged in the back of her throat, whilst she had also been struck by three or four other bullets.

Next day we marched on and pitched our camp on the bank of the river at Pandri, where S—— and A. R. Burton shot some spotted deer, including one fine one with horns thirty-six inches long, whilst I busied myself in looking up the haunts of the tigers. Chunder shikari was despatched with a party, accompanied by a mounted man to bring in intelligence, to the high ground above the village of Lhona, near which I had shot three tigers in pre-

vious years. The following morning a man arrived from this party with news that a tigress had killed a four-horned antelope near the village of Nichpur, and had dragged it into a small, thickly-wooded ravine.

We rode off at once seven miles to the scene of operations, and found the faithful and indefatigable Chunder ready with the beaters. The beat was soon organised, for the ground was easy, and the tigress could not escape. The tracks and the mark of the drag led into a deep, bamboo-choked ravine, with a stony bed, whence there was but one exit. This time A. R. Burton got the best place, and shot the tigress without difficulty as she walked down the nullah. A bear then came hurriedly along above him, but did not offer a fair shot, owing to the dense cover that clothed the side of the ravine. It was a long way back to camp, through jungle and down a steep hill-side, where our horses found it difficult to keep their footing, and we did not arrive until after dark, having had a hard day's work.

Next morning we found that a large tiger that had been patrolling the banks of the river for the previous two nights had killed one of our buffaloes in the Kinwat Forest Reserve. However, nothing appeared in the beat except a herd of spotted deer, a number of pea-fowl, and a forest guard. Perhaps the tiger had been disturbed by the forest guards, who are very zealous in trying to keep all the tigers in the reserve for their master, the forest officer, although of course without his cognisance.

Finding little chance of obtaining sport in the

forest, we moved on to Patoda, where I had shot a large tiger the previous year. At the same time we sent a party to explore the jungle about Yenda Penda, on the eastern confines of Kinwat. On this occasion we fortunately eluded the vigilance of the forest officer's myrmidons, who thought that we had entirely left the vicinity of the reserve, when we were encamped eight miles from it. On the 15th March a kill was reported to have taken place in the river bed near Bulja, where we beat out a fine tiger, which was killed by A. R. Burton without incident. Leaving a party of shikaris there to tie up for a tigress, we returned to our camp at Patoda, and next morning drove a couple of panthers out of the valley, one of which I missed with a difficult shot, whilst the other was shot through the stomach by my brother. The beast ran about a quarter of a mile after being hit, with its entrails hanging out, and then fell headlong down a steep bank into a nullah, where we found it lying dead.

There were no tigers in the Patoda valley, so I sent Bhima and Nuttoo with the camp to Dhygaon, to look at the C—— jungles and search the head of the K—— River, whilst we that same evening rode over to Yenda, and bivouacked there on the bank of the river. Next morning we entered the reserve, and shot a couple of spotted deer, one of which I killed with a good shot while it was galloping across a glade a hundred and fifty yards off. On our return to camp a kill was reported to have taken place in the forest some four miles off. In the beat a tigress soon put in an appearance, and tried to break out at several points, but was turned back,

and eventually came out just ahead of the beaters close to A. R. Burton, who shot her dead.

We then rode off twelve miles to Patoda, and bivouacked there for the night. Soon after dark, my horse, a valuable Arab, got a severe attack of colic; and it was an anxious time, but with the aid of rum and hot blankets the animal was fortunately brought round, and was all right by morning.

Daybreak found us on our way on an eight-mile march across the hills, and by breakfast-time we arrived in camp at Dhygaon, to find that a kill had taken place in the nullah above C——, some seven miles from camp, where I had killed a tiger two years before. I posted S—— in the tree from which I had killed my tiger, and, soon after the beat commenced, the noise made by the stops and the angry responsive growl of the tiger announced that the game was afoot, and trying to break out to the flank. He was turned by the artillery orderly and dashed past S——, who hit him far back with his first shot, and shot him dead with another bullet as he scrambled to the top of the bank forty yards from me.

This made the fifth tiger we had shot in the first ten days of our outing; but after this we had a run of bad luck. On two occasions our shikaris met with tigers in the bed of the K—— River, but the animals appeared to be wandering, and they did not happen upon any of our buffaloes. We encamped two days at Pipri, where numbers of people were suffering from terrible sores on their feet and legs, probably caused by bad water, and then we moved on to another village. Here I was again disappointed.

The nullah was very different to what it was in 1895. It was now dry, bare, and empty, containing no sign of tigers; so I resolved to plunge into the heart of the Gond country. We marched two days for thirty miles through dense forest, and pitched camp at S——, in the vicinity of which the presence of tigers had been reported by my shikaris when they visited the place in January.

We had now endured ten blank days, without even a kill to enliven the proceedings; so we looked forward to finding some tigers at last in this land of promise, which had never been visited by other sportsmen, and of which I have given some account in the previous chapter.

The country through which we had just passed was all covered with dense forest, containing but little water and few villages. Consequently there was scarcely any game; and the place where we were now encamped, in the vicinity of which was a fair number of villages and abundant water, was like an oasis in the desert. Three miles beyond S—— was a considerable village, the residence of the rajah of the Gonds. This village was situated on the shores of two extensive lakes, and in the neighbourhood were numerous ravines, containing but little water and not much shade at this dry season of the year. Many footprints in these water-courses showed that tigers were about. Belonging to the rajah and villagers were large herds of cattle, affording an attraction to the tigers, whilst there was also a fair quantity of game, such as spotted deer, blue bull, and four-horned antelope. On the lakes, although it was now the end of March, were

countless myriads of wild-fowl, mostly cotton and whistling teal, but there were also some gadwalls and other migratory duck, whilst snipe were fairly numerous. Unfortunately, we had brought only a small supply of shot-cartridges, which were soon exhausted in keeping the larder supplied with wild-fowl and other game. It was reported that a man-eating tiger was in the vicinity, and that it had accounted for twenty-five victims, but, as is usual in such cases, the reports were greatly exaggerated, for we could obtain authentic intelligence of only one man having been killed. On the second day of our stay a buffalo was killed, only half a mile from our camp. The kill was in a broad deep nullah, close to the road, where there was only one pool of water and but little shade. Before the beat commenced, I saw a large tigress emerge from the long grass on the far side of the watercourse, and descend the bank, coming in my direction. She soon appeared on my side of the stream, and then turned her flank to me, stopping behind some bushes. I fired too hastily, and hit her through the hind-leg, and she galloped out into the open between me and my brother, who dropped her dead with a good shot through the heart; she went over like a rabbit struck with a charge of shot.

Next morning a kill was reported to have taken place in the D—— nullah, on the far side of the lake. Soon after the beat commenced, a tigress came along the bank of the watercourse over which I was posted, and was walking straight towards me when one of the stops foolishly began to make a row. The tigress stopped, and then with a muttered

growl streaked past me through the jungle fifty yards off, so that I obtained only two difficult snap-shots, and of course missed the beast. This was a great disappointment, for she would have doubtless walked slowly by had she not been startled, as she was gorged with beef, and the heat was intense.

She was a bold animal, for she came back that same night and slew another buffalo that had been tied up in the same place, under a clump of trees, near a clear pool of water that lay among the rocks. This time she was disturbed before the beat commenced, and went off without giving us so much as a glimpse of her striped coat.

That night S—— sat up in a tree over the remains of the kill, but did not get a shot, as there was no moonlight. The tigress came in the middle of the night, and left before dawn, a crunching of bones in the darkness having been the sole indication of her presence. The following night she killed another buffalo, lower down the nullah; but, as two other kills had taken place, we resolved to leave this tigress for the present, she having doubtless become exceedingly cunning. We rode out six miles to one of the other kills. The tragedy had taken place on the bank of a broad, dry river bed, where it seemed certain that we should find the tiger, for his marks were visible everywhere in the sand.

Nevertheless, we were disappointed, for, the buffalo having been a small one, the beast had walked off a long way with it. He seemed to have picked it up as a cat carries a mouse, and had devoured it in a large patch of grass beyond the limits of the beat. A. R. Burton and I then took

the shikaris and beaters with us, and made all haste to the other kill, which had taken place seven miles up the nullah, at the same spot where we had shot the tigress, near the village of S——. As he had a bad attack of fever, S—— could not accompany us, and was obliged to return to camp.

When we arrived on the scene of action the sun was already sinking towards the hills, and the lengthening shadows had thrown the watercourse into shade when I took up my position in my old place, whilst my brother was posted on the far side of the nullah. The beat had scarcely commenced, when I heard the tiger roar fiercely on the other side of the watercourse. It turned out afterwards that his anger had been excited by a waist-cloth, hung on a bush to turn him towards the guns, which he had torn down by a stroke of his mighty paw. He then tried to break out of the beat, and was with difficulty turned by one of my sepoys, who was sitting in a tree, fortunately in a safe position.

The tiger then came back towards the nullah, looking very evilly inclined, and descended into it some thirty yards behind me. I hit him behind the shoulder, rather far back, and he dashed up the bank and went about for some time, wounded unto death, for his lungs were pierced, and then he turned and dropped into a patch of grass.

In the meantime the local rajah, who had been following us all day to see the sport, but had only now caught us up, suddenly appeared upon the scene. He was riding on a pony towards the wounded tiger, all ignorant of his danger, and might possibly have met with a fearful and untimely

end had not A. R. Burton, who did not at first recognise him, fired such volleys of abuse as caused him to flee in the direction whence he came. After a careful search we found the tiger lying dead in the grass, and at nightfall he was carried into camp amid the acclamations of the multitude.

Next day a kill was reported at K——, a place four miles off, which I had already visited, and found so favourable for a beat that I felt confident that the tiger would be slain. He was, however, almost escaping, for, when coming straight towards S——, a four-horned antelope dashed across his path, causing him to swerve off and try to leave the beat to one flank. Fortunately, my brother saw the beast going off, and with a long shot hit him low down behind the elbow, rolling him over and causing him to turn back.

I was posted a long way off behind a small hill on the other side of the beat, so saw nothing of what happened, and was therefore somewhat astonished, about five minutes after the shot was fired, to hear the heavy tread of a tiger approaching me. Soon the great beast emerged from the jungle, coming straight towards me with slow and slouching gait; and as he came along I perceived that he was sorely wounded, his chest being covered with blood. And so the poor beast came along with painful step and hanging head, and as he passed beneath my tree I dropped him dead with a bullet in the neck. The first shot had struck him too low to injure any vital part, and had inflicted only a superficial wound, so the beast would doubtless have given us much trouble had not his fate brought him to one of the

guns. The carcase was carried to the adjacent village, where a hen was decapitated in front of it by the Gonds, as an offering to the tiger god; whilst all the women assembled and did obeisance to the monster, bringing also their children, and placing each a small coin on the tiger's body or in front of its jaws. For these primitive people look on the tiger as their god; and small marvel, seeing what a wondrous creature he is, with matchless symmetry of form and mighty strength, before which man seems an insignificant puppet.

Next day we went to look for the tigress I had missed, now the only animal of its kind remaining in the vicinity, but we could not find the beast. The day after that, she killed another buffalo—this time in the same place where we had already shot two tigers. But the beat was empty, and it was evident that she had left very early in the morning, knowing full well the significance of a tied-up buffalo. So we tied up another, and went sadly home, determining to try a stalk the following day.

Next morning at daybreak we crept noiselessly up to the place, where we found this buffalo also dead, and the red flesh still reeking; but the cunning beast had fled into the night, and all our labour was in vain.

We now decided to leave this tigress and go in search of more attainable game, so moved across the hills to P——, where the brother of our Gond rajah resided. This rajah was quite a humble individual, —a mere savage in comparison with his august relative,—labouring in the fields in company with his men; but he was a good fellow, and, although there

were no tigers about his village, he gave me such information as enabled us to bring five more tigers to bag within the next fortnight.

The new rajah told us we would find tigers at B——, a village eight miles off; so I sent Bhima there with a party of followers, and next day received news that there were tigers about. Our carts and camels could get to B—— only by making a detour of forty miles, so I got out of the difficulty by reducing the baggage as far as possible; and then, collecting all available villagers to carry it, about twenty Gonds, we marched across the hills to the new ground. Our way lay through some very fine country, over tall hills with precipitous sides, and across deep rocky ravines. Some five miles from our camp we arrived on a steep declivity overlooking the bed of the river, to which we descended with some difficulty. Our path lay through a dense forest, containing many giant clumps of thick bamboos, and tall ebony and other trees. The bed of the ravine was strewn with huge boulders, as though torn by titanic hands from the rocks above, and hurled with thunderous volume into the vale below. The stream was now dry in most places, but here and there were silent shaded pools, on whose margins the refreshing verdure relieved the grey-brown colours of the burnt-up landscape. The bamboos were all withered and dry, and sometimes whole clumps of them, torn up by the roots, lay upon the ground. A general seeding of bamboos, which occurs only once in thirty years, and after which they all wither and die, had evidently taken place—a fortunate occurrence for the

natives in this year of famine. No living thing stirred in the depths of the forest, save for the tree-crickets that screeched aloud with ceaseless whirr of wings; but as we approached our destination towards evening the jungle-fowl and pea-fowl began to awake the echoes in the neighbouring glen, and the silence was broken by the bark of the spotted deer.

Our new camp was pitched beneath some tamarind-trees near the village of B——, on the margin of a broad, stony river bed. The river contained a considerable amount of water, distributed in pools throughout its length, and it was also shaded by cool covers of jamun bushes and tamarisk, where the tigers could lie at ease during the heat of the day.

Next morning I went to look at the buffaloes that had been tied up, and found that one had been killed in the bed of the ravine, a couple of miles below the camp. We managed to collect some thirty beaters, including those who had brought our baggage from the last village. Soon after the beat commenced a tiger walked out to S——, who shot it through the heart. Shortly afterwards a tigress came through the cover in front of me, and trotted across some forty yards off, giving vent to sundry growls, and then broke into a gallop. I could easily have shot her, but saw that she was making straight for S——, so left her alone. She dashed by five yards from S——, who shot her through the body, and she tore on, but plunged with a crash into a clump of bamboos a hundred yards farther on, on the margin of the river, where we found her lying dead.

These were a very old tiger and tigress, with their coats faded by age to a light-yellow colour, and their canine teeth worn and broken to stumps. They had infested these jungles and haunted the hamlet of B—— for many years, and had stolen many fat kine from the village herds. So bold and fearless had they become from long impunity, the villagers informed us, that they would frequently enter the cattle-pens by night and carry off their prey, whilst they were on familiar terms with the inhabitants of the village, whom they never molested.

Next morning we decided to move on, but before leaving we killed another tiger, that had taken one of our buffaloes during the night. The jungle was very thick, and the tiger came trotting along through close tree-forest towards A. R. Burton, who killed it with two bullets. On the same day we moved on to our next camping-ground, lower down the river, and on the road found the tracks of a tigress that had come towards B—— during the night. Had we remained there, we would doubtless have brought her also to bag; but I was not sorry that she escaped, to breed more of her kind.

Finding nothing here, we moved on to J——, a large village on the bank of a considerable stream, where we were joined by our camp, which had come round by road. Several tigers were reported to be in the vicinity, but it was not until the second day after our arrival that one of our buffaloes was killed in the bed of a watercourse near the village of S——. In the beat that ensued, I occupied a place on the shelving bank of the river, where the shady



ONE OF OUR BUFFALOES WAS KILLED.

trees and bushes cast their shadows on the sand and shingle below, and on a broad pool of water that covered half the breadth of the river bed. Before the beat commenced a herd of spotted deer came out, headed by a fine stag, and drank at the pool, but dashed off in alarm on hearing the first shout of the beaters.

Soon an immense tiger emerged from the bushes on the far side of the river. He looked around him, standing with fearless and majestic mien, then trotted across the sand, splashed through the water, and climbed the bank a hundred yards above me. It was indeed a magnificent sight, and alone worth marching all the way we had come. On arriving at the top of the bank the tiger was turned back by my horse-keeper, who had been posted there for this purpose. Uttering a fierce growl, he trotted along the shady bank straight towards me, and passed within two or three yards, receiving a bullet as he went. He galloped off into thick jungle, and we followed cautiously on the blood tracks, and found him dead a couple of hundred yards farther on.

A few days later, A. R. Burton shot our last tiger near the village of P——, about five miles off, and the end of the week found us on our way home. At one place I spent a day in pursuit of bison; but although tracks of a large solitary bull were found, and I followed the spoor during the greater part of the day, I was unable to come up with the animal. There were but few bison in the district. We found tracks of a herd of about seven animals near the same place, and on another occasion Chunder and Nuttoo came across a small herd.

On the march back we found that but few tigers remained in the country we had passed through. The tigress was still haunting the same valley near the rajah's village, and at another place on the top of the mountains we came across the tracks of a tigress and two cubs; but we did not wish to shoot cubs or their mother. And marching day after day we at length left the jungle, and, after a couple of days passed in antelope-shooting, arrived at Hingoli the first week in May.

It may not be inopportune to make here some remarks regarding the killing of tiger cubs, a practice that is very prevalent among some sportsmen. Although there is an abundance of big game still remaining in many parts of India, it is confined to a much more limited area than in days gone by. This may, no doubt, be ascribed in great measure to the increased population and to the spread of lines of communication over the land. Still, the extensive region of Government Reserved Forests, and the less accessible and more remote parts of the country, serve to afford a shelter for the wild animals, where they can increase and multiply, whilst the game laws in force in certain parts of the country further contribute to the preservation of game of all kinds. It is, however, in the more accessible parts of the peninsula that the decrease of game is noticeable. There are many localities where big game formerly abounded, but where in these days no wild animal is to be met with. And this is not entirely due to the causes detailed above, nor to fair shooting. In reading almost any old book on big-game shooting, one sees how cows, does, and

hinds, according to their kind, were indiscriminately slaughtered, whilst the young of all animals were considered fair game.

Nowadays, things are better in some respects. The killing of females of the *ungulata* is considered unsportsmanlike, so also is the destruction of their young, which is consequently seldom indulged in. What I would urge is, with reference to deer, bison, and such animals, that the unlimited slaughter of males should also be discountenanced, and that sportsmen should be satisfied when a few heads of each species have been obtained.

I would further suggest that the immunity enjoyed by the young of harmless animals should be extended to the young of dangerous game, such as tigers and bears. Fair shooting does comparatively little harm, but the promiscuous slaughter of females and young must in time bring about a serious diminution, if not an entire destruction, of game. I fear that the practice of the slaughter of tiger cubs is, from my own observation during the last few years, only too prevalent. There can surely be no two opinions on this question among true sportsmen; and it may be presumed that, theoretically, most men will agree that the practice is a reprehensible one, and should be discontinued in the same manner as the slaying of does and hinds and their young.

The plea that tigers are dangerous and destructive animals, and should therefore be destroyed irrespective of age or sex, will not hold water for a moment. For it may be assumed that sportsmen shoot for the sake of sport, and not from motives

of philanthropy. And as sportsmen deplore the decrease of game, it is to their interest to commit no acts tending towards that decrease, more than is rendered necessary by fair shooting. And the killing of the young of any animal, whether tiger or deer, cannot be termed fair shooting. The cub has no chance of escape, it is not dangerous to pursue, and it does not yield a trophy of any value.

To what, then, must we ascribe a practice, wanting in every element of sport, which is as reprehensible as it is prevalent? Beyond doubt, to the desire, among some men, of being able to boast of having obtained a big bag, regardless of what the bag consists, provided the animals composing it may be referred to as tigers. For the public is in such cases not generally informed that the bag consists of so many tigers and so many cubs. The animals are usually all referred to as tigers, irrespective of their size; and I have even heard it stated that one sportsman was in the habit of counting in his bag tigers yet unborn, and of claiming the reward for their destruction.

It may be urged that cubs deprived of the mother-tigress would assuredly perish, being unable to provide food for themselves. But to this contention it may be retorted, that tigresses with cubs should not be molested; whilst, however, should the tigress be inadvertently killed, and the cubs be too small to look after themselves and too large to capture, it would of course be better to shoot them than to leave them to perish miserably of starvation. It is probably only necessary to call the attention of sportsmen to this subject, in order to obtain their full concurrence with the justice of these remarks,

and it is to be hoped that the wanton killing of tiger cubs will be so far discountenanced in future as to call down well-deserved obloquy on the perpetrators of such deeds.

In a chapter devoted exclusively to tiger-shooting, it may be considered necessary to make some remarks on the length of tigers, but I have no wish to join in any such controversy. I therefore merely append the measurements, carefully taken in a straight line, and not round the curves of the body, of twenty-seven tigers brought to bag by me in the Deccan in the years 1895, 1896, 1897.

Animal.	Length of Head and Body.		Length of Tail.		Total Length.		Measurements of Skull from end to end and across Zygomatic Arches.	Remarks.
	ft.	in.	ft.	in.	ft.	in.	inches.	
1. Tigress	5	6	3	0	8	6	$11\frac{1}{2} \times 8$	
2. Tiger	6	5	3	2	9	7	$13\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{3}{4}$	
3. ,,	6	4	3	0	9	4	$13\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{3}{4}$	
4. ,,	6	3	3	0	9	3	$13 \times 8\frac{3}{4}$	
5. ,,	6	3	3	0	9	3	$13 \times 8\frac{1}{4}$	
6. ,,	6	0	3	0	9	0	$13 \times 8\frac{1}{4}$	
7. ,,	6	8	3	0	9	8	$14 \times 9\frac{1}{4}$	
8. ,,	6	5	3	2	9	7	$13\frac{3}{4} \times 9\frac{3}{8}$	
9. ,,	4	9	2	6	7	3	$11\frac{1}{8} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$	A young tiger.
10. Tigress	5	8	2	10	8	6	$11\frac{3}{4} \times 8$	
11. ,,	5	3	3	0	8	3	$11\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$	
12. ,,	5	2	2	8	7	10	$11\frac{3}{4} \times 7\frac{7}{8}$	
13. ,,	5	2	2	11	8	1	$11\frac{3}{4} \times 8\frac{1}{4}$	
14. Tiger	6	6	3	0	9	6	$14\frac{3}{8} \times 9\frac{1}{2}$	
15. Tigress	5	5	2	10	8	3	$11\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{7}{8}$	
16. ,,	5	2	2	10	8	0	$11\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{5}{8}$	
17. Tiger	5	10	3	0	8	10	$13\frac{1}{8} \times 9\frac{1}{4}$	
18. Tigress	5	3	2	11	8	2	$11\frac{5}{8} \times 7\frac{1}{4}$	
19. Tiger	5	8	2	$11\frac{1}{2}$	8	$7\frac{1}{2}$	$13\frac{1}{2} \times 9\frac{3}{8}$	
20. Tigress	5	3	2	11	8	2	$11\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{5}{8}$	
21. Tiger	6	1	3	0	9	1	$13\frac{1}{4} \times 9\frac{1}{4}$	
22. ,,	5	6	3	0	8	6	$12\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{1}{4}$	
23. ,,	6	0	3	$1\frac{1}{2}$	9	$1\frac{1}{2}$	$13\frac{1}{4} \times 9\frac{1}{8}$	
24. Tigress	5	$2\frac{1}{2}$	3	$1\frac{1}{2}$	8	4	$11\frac{1}{4} \times 8\frac{1}{8}$	
25. Tiger	5	11	2	11	8	10	$13\frac{1}{4} \times 8\frac{7}{8}$	
26. ,,	5	11	3	1	9	0	$13\frac{3}{8} \times 9\frac{1}{8}$	
27. ,,	5	1	3	1	8	2	...	

This expedition finished my big-game shooting for the present, with the exception of a bear and a panther which I brought to bag at Singhi, some twenty miles from Hingoli, towards the end of May. In November I obtained a year's leave, and embarked for England, hoping to return some day and revisit those jungles where it has been my lot to meet with such good sport.

And what recreation could be more desirable? What greater pleasure can man have than this wandering in wild places, far from the track of civilisation and from the turmoil and trouble of the world, with his trusty shikaris, his rifle, and the wild beasts for companions? Such adventures give us something to think of, something to look back upon from the dreary waste of the years to come, when the "jungle-call" shall no longer sound in our ears. The grinning feline skull that stands upon the bracket, the striped skin that decks the floor, will bring back to the memory thoughts of glorious days. Such thoughts, such recollections, will remain and gladden the heart when the eye has grown too dim to draw a bead, the hand too feeble to raise a rifle to the shoulder, and naught remains save the trophies of the chase and the contemplation of the past.

CHAPTER XIX

A MONTH IN NORWAY

Voyage to Europe—Brindisi—Naples—Pompeii—Rome—Voyage to Norway—Travelling in Norway—Bergen—The Sogn Fjord—Vadheim—Sande—The Viks Lake—Trout in Norway—A Fisherman's Cottage—Norwegian Hotels—Langeland—Ferde Hafstadt—Timber in Norway—Nedre Vasenden—A Land of no Night—The Jolster Lake and River—Voyage to Skei—The great Jolster Glacier—Fishing at Skei—The Bredheim Lake—Sombre Scenery—Absence of *Fauna*—Great Lake Trout—"Otters"—The Sandals Lake—The Red River—A Wonderful Valley—Remnants of the Glacial Epoch—Moraines—Red—Return Journey—Character of the Norwegians.

At the end of 1897, having obtained a year's leave, I left Bombay in the steamer *Egypt*, and arrived at Brindisi after a voyage of some twelve days, if possible a more monotonous journey than usual, for we had come from a plague-infected port, and were not permitted to land anywhere *en route*. Brindisi is not an interesting port, except from its associations to us Anglo-Indians, as being the *ultima thule* of Europe, the southern point whence we sail for the East on our departure, and land again on our return, perhaps after many years. At this place we are inclined to look back through the vista of long years to the day when we first stood here, looking towards the East, which was then a land of promise to us; and dreamt dreams—never to be realised, and nourished hopes—never to be fulfilled. Hence the

tide of life for ever flows eastwards, and ever returns in lessened volume, for to how many has this proved a Stygian shore, where they have embarked for a land of lost footsteps, never to return!

Having no inducement to remain at Brindisi, I journeyed along the western coast of Italy to Naples, and, having visited the lost city of Pompeii, passed on to see the wonders of Rome. But the attractions of the Eternal City were not sufficient to keep me there long, and I was glad to reach the shores of England again after some years of exile.

The wanderer on the face of the earth soon tires of the calm joys of English country life, and the turmoil of great cities is apt to become wearisome to one who has been accustomed to pass the greater part of his time in the comparative seclusion of an Indian station. Yet one does not like to stray far from one's native land during the short period of hard-earned leave, and Europe generally offers but few attractions. Still there is a country yet remaining on the tourist-ridden Continent where one can travel free and untrammelled amid a comparatively primitive civilisation, whilst the sport it affords adds to its attractions for most Englishmen.

A voyage of some thirty-six hours will take the traveller from Newcastle or Hull to Bergen, the principal port of Western Norway, and from Bergen all parts of the Scandinavian peninsula are more or less easily accessible by road, or by the coasting steamers which run up the fjords—those arms of the sea whence the vikings issued on their predatory excursions in the days when they overran almost the whole of Europe. The country has not yet been

spoilt by tourists, although it is visited annually by ever-increasing thousands, but the people do not exhibit that rapacity which characterises the inhabitants of most Continental countries, who regard the British traveller as their lawful prey. The mode of travelling, whether by steamer or by carriage, is fairly comfortable. The vessels are well-appointed and commodious, whilst the vehicles procurable at the posting-stations are well-horsed by sure-footed though somewhat slow ponies. The fishing to be obtained is excellent. The salmon rivers are all rented at high prices, but trout-fishing is to be obtained free of cost in nearly all parts of the country.

Late in June 1898 I made the voyage to Bergen in the Wilson Line steamer *Eldorado* from Hull, and arrived at my destination after a good passage in that excellent vessel.

Bergen is situated at the head of a deep bay, enclosed by lofty mountains. There is not much of interest to be seen in the town, which is chiefly notable as being the oldest of the Hanse towns. It is said to be always raining there; and the short period of my stay was no exception to the rule, for it poured incessantly. I remained there only long enough to make the necessary arrangements for my journey, and then took passage by coasting-steamer up the Sogn Fjord to Vadheim. The voyage up the fjord was not particularly interesting, for the scenery on the coast is not as fine as it is in the interior of the country, being characterised by bare and barren rocks, which remind one somewhat of the shores of Arabia; but farther up the fjord the mountains

were splashed with snow, and at times clothed with forests of birch and pine trees stretching down to the water's edge.

From Vadheim a drive of nine miles through a rocky gorge, and along the bank of a river which at times widened out into small lakes, brought me to Sande, a hamlet situated on the bank of a fine stream that flows into the Sond Fjord. The river below a fall about half a mile from the hotel is let for salmon-fishing, but above that the proprietor has the right of fishing for some little distance. The trout here are of small size, and are not worth casting a fly for; the reputation of the river appears to rest principally upon a six-pound fish that was caught in front of the hotel some years ago. There is, however, a good pool in the river some four miles above Sande, where twenty-two trout, the largest weighing four pounds, were killed on the evening of my arrival.

Better sport is obtainable in the Viks Lake, about five miles distant, where I had two days fishing with the Devon minnow, basketing some fifty-six trout varying in weight from half a pound upwards. The lake is a fine sheet of water many miles long, surrounded by great forest-clad mountains, which frequently rise sheer from the water's edge. The trout in the Norway lakes and rivers vary greatly in appearance, although the differences are not considered by experts sufficient to justify their separation into distinct species, the varieties being generally ascribed to local conditions. But it is strange, if this is the case, that trout of varied shape and colouring are found not only in the same lake,

but in the same part of the water. I have caught in one part of a lake trout of silvery hue, with no pink spots; and others more like English trout, with golden sides and pink spots, whilst the flesh of some of these fish is white, and of others is salmon-coloured. However, that water has a great deal to do with the colouring of trout is evident from the fact that fish of an almost black hue may be taken out of dark pools among the rocks, whilst the red colouring matter of streams containing iron is imparted to the inhabitants of its water, and those fish that live in the water flowing from snow and ice are generally of a light green colour, like the element in which they exist.

At Viks I entered an old fisherman's cottage, by invitation. It was a most primitive habitation, built, like all Norwegian edifices, of planks on a basis of stone some three or four feet high. The roof was also of planks, with a layer of turf on the top, on which shrubs of considerable size were growing.

The hotel at Sande is exceedingly comfortable, and its proprietor is a most courteous and obliging host, exerting himself in every way for the convenience of his guests. Like nearly all buildings in Norway, the hotels are all constructed of wood, and there is considerable danger of fire owing to the inflammable nature of the material. That fire is a very real danger, is evident from the precautions taken to secure the escape of the inmates in case of a conflagration. Each room is provided with a fire-escape, with instructions for its use; but in my room at Sande there was no fire-escape, only

a notice to the effect that, in case of fire, the occupant of the chamber should get out of the window and cross the sloping roof below, where he would find a ladder descending to the ground. Generally speaking, the hotels in Norway are very comfortable, and the proprietors are not grasping; indeed, the unmercenary character of the Norwegians, generally, is most noticeable. The usual charge in the country hotels is only four *kroner* (or about four shillings) a day, inclusive of everything; so the cheapness of the country is another thing to recommend it to those whose means are limited.

From Sande an uphill drive of seven miles brings the traveller to Langeland, where there is a posting-station and a farmhouse in which accommodation for a few visitors is available. There is said to be good fishing in the neighbouring lake, but I did not try it, and drove on seven miles farther to Ferde Hafstadt. This was a pleasant drive along a good road, that winds along the mountain-sides to the valley below. At one time the road skirts the shore of a lake, with precipitous rocks at the side. Just before reaching our destination we passed above a beautiful lake studded with small wooded islets, and surrounded by tall mountains. The calm surface of the lake was broken by innumerable rising fish, but the water appeared to be shallow, and it is doubtful if it holds trout of any size.

Ferde Hafstadt is a considerable village, standing on the bank of a river near its mouth on the Sond Fjord, in a broad and fertile valley. The river is a good one for salmon-fishing, and a fish of fifty-one

pounds, killed here a few years ago, is outlined on the steps of the hotel.

From Ferde I drove on fourteen miles to Nedre Vasenden, on the Jolster Lake, passing *en route* through a dense forest of fir and birch trees. The timber in Norway, or at least in this part of it, is disappointing, the trees of all kinds being very small, and far inferior to English and Scotch woods. I saw none of the tall Norwegian pines that one hears so much about, for those that came under my observation were comparatively insignificant in size.

Nedre Vasenden is situated on the shore of the great Jolster Lake, an expanse of water some fourteen miles in length, and varying from one to three miles in breadth. The Jolster River, famous for its trout, rushes out of the lake close to the hotel, whilst a fine waterfall was visible from the window of my room. At midnight I sat at my window listening to the roaring of the torrent, and looking out at the waterfall and the snow-clad mountains. At this time of the year, early in July, it was light enough to read at midnight, and Norway is then indeed a land of no night, although the evenings draw in rapidly towards the end of the month. The hotel at Vasenden is very comfortable, and can be recommended for a prolonged stay, as the fishing in the neighbourhood is generally good.

During my stay there the sport was spoilt by unfavourable weather, and I caught no fish over a pound in weight. The Jolster Lake, doubtless, contains some immense trout, and one of fifteen pounds was caught here last year; but these great

fish seem to lie at the bottom of the deep water, and are seldom killed.

The river at Nedre Vasenden holds good fish, and it affords the principal attraction to the many anglers who annually visit this place. It is a broad and rapid stream, with marshy banks, and it is necessary to wade in order to reach the best pools.

A steamer runs thrice daily across the Jolster Lake to Skei, occupying about two hours on the voyage of fourteen miles, and on this I embarked after a few days' stay at Vasenden. The journey across the lake affords one a good opportunity of observing and admiring the beautiful scenery which is characteristic of this part of Norway. The Jolster Lake is bright and open, with mountains sloping down to its shores, partly covered with forest and partly with open pasture and cultivated land, amidst which stand many picturesque hamlets. In the distance snowy peaks pierce the sky, and near Skei the steamer passes an arm of the lake, at the head of which the great Jolster glacier, the largest in Europe, can be seen where it crops out from beneath the snow-field on the mountain-tops. This glacier is crossed annually by a considerable number of tourists, but personally I preferred to view it from a distance, and desired to make no nearer acquaintance with it. Indeed, I cannot understand the vanity that impels people to climb mountains merely for the sake of saying that they have been there.

At Skei I stayed some days, and caught some good fish both in the lake near the hotel, and at the head of the fjord where the glacier stream joins the waters of the lake. This stream is some seven miles

from Skei, and is therefore a good long pull; but I used to take my lunch and go out for the whole day, whilst the journey was not wasted, for many fish could be caught on the way by trailing a minnow behind the boat. The trout here are of fine size and quality, and the icy water from the glacier appears to endow them with extra vitality, so they afford good sport. Large fish are caught here not infrequently; I myself was so fortunate as to capture a trout of six pounds weight, whilst two others of nearly nine pounds each were killed in the same locality.

The great objections to Norway are the climate and the food; but as regards the former the year was doubtless an unusually damp one, for it rained constantly during July, and when a cold wind was not prevalent the clouds hung low on the mountains, and sometimes descended to the surface of the water. Good meat does not appear to be obtainable in the country, and an everlasting diet of badly-cooked fish and eggs is apt to pall.

From Skei I drove seven miles along the bank of a small stream to the shore of the Bredheim Lake, and there embarked myself and baggage on a large boat rowed by two men and a woman. They pulled across the lake to the village of Red, a voyage that occupied us nearly four hours, although the distance was not more than six or seven miles; but the water was very rough, and a strong head wind was blowing. On the way I trailed a minnow behind the boat, and caught a fine trout and a grayling of one pound weight. Besides trout, grayling and char are the only fish that exist in these waters, and they appear to be scarce, and are seldom caught.

The Bredheim Lake is a vast and gloomy expanse of water, surrounded by sombre, precipitous mountains, rising generally sheer from deep water, and clad with dark pine trees which cling in groups to the poor soil of the rocky heights. In the cold and rainy weather experienced there, I found this lake a most depressing place, and its sombre scenery reminds one of nothing so much as a picture from Dante's *Inferno*. Few villages are seen upon the shore, and, except at Red, but little pasture land or cultivation are on the margin of the lake. It is a great expanse of dark water, surrounded by overhanging rocks and gloomy forests, from which thin waterfalls drop into the lake, and even on the rare occasions when I saw a gleam of sunshine the scenery did not lose its sombre aspect. In the vicinity are some tall mountains topped by eternal snow, and sometimes fresh snow could be seen falling on the heights.

The forests around the Bredheim Lake are of vast extent, and one would think that they should contain a considerable quantity of game, for they would afford many impregnable strongholds to wild animals. They are, however, singularly destitute of both animal and bird life, and this absence of *fauna* appears to be characteristic of the whole of this part of Norway. One may traverse miles of forest and see few signs of wild life stirring in the thickets. A few bears are at times seen on the higher mountains, or occasionally give evidence of their presence by making depredations on the sheepfolds, but they are very scarce; some lynxes, foxes, and hares are said to exist. Magpies and fieldfares are numerous, and an occasional falcon may be seen soaring over

the precipices that skirt the lakes, but birds are generally scarce. The reason for this is not very evident. There is a profusion of wild berries of various kinds growing on the mountain-sides, whilst insect life is everywhere abundant; so there is no lack of food for both furred and feathered denizens of the forest, whilst the mountains and woods offer innumerable secure retreats.

It is most probable that there has never been an abundance of wild life in a country where human life is in many parts almost imperceptibly sprinkled over the earth's surface, and where the inhospitable winter with its long nights is so unfavourable to existence.

The fishing on the Bredheim Lake is not generally good, the fish being generally small and few in number. There is no doubt, however, that it contains some immense trout, and one of twelve pounds weight was caught this year by a gentleman who some years ago hooked and lost a fish which he estimated to weigh thirty pounds. I found the best place for fishing to be at some sawmills from four to five miles from the hotel, where mountain torrents emptied themselves into the lake. The fishing is doubtless much spoilt by "otters," a poaching contrivance used by the natives. This is constructed of a weighted board, with a long line attached, furnished with a great number of flies. The end of the line is held by a man in a boat, the movement of which causes the flies to bob invitingly up and down, and thus large numbers of fish are caught. I have seen on one evening five or six of these "otters" quartering the lake in front

of the village of Red, and they must be the cause of the destruction of innumerable fish.

About nine miles from Red, near the source of a river, is the Sandals Lake, lying at the foot of an offshoot of the Jolster glacier, and said to be very good for fishing. But I killed very few fish there, probably owing to unfavourable weather, for an icy wind was blowing off the snows the whole time that I was on the lake. I worked my way back to Red along the stream, which contained beautiful pools and broad reaches, but the trout were small, and, of some forty I caught there, very few were worth keeping.

The valley through which the river flowed appeared as if it had been subjected to some great cataclysm, being strewn with gigantic fragments of rock covered with the moss of ages, which looked like the remnants of mountains that had stood there in bygone times. It was crossed in places by immense moraines, remains of the glacial period, during which the ice had deeply scored the faces of the rocks, and had formed, in the accumulations of thousands of years, those great embankments through which the river had forced its way in the course of countless ages. These great rocks and scored precipices and ancient moraines and rushing torrents bear witness of the age of the earth. The contemplation of such vast spaces of time and such mighty works of nature are calculated to impress man with a sense of his own insignificance. For we, who think so much of the trifles that make up the sum of our trifling lives, will pass away into the illimitable eternity, leaving

no more impression on the course of time than a stone cast into the river, which will flow on whilst countless generations of men come and go.

The hotel at Red is a quiet place, as it is not much frequented by travellers, being off the main tourist route. The food there is even less inviting than at most Norwegian hotels, and the angler who makes a stay of any length there is recommended to provide himself with a good supply of tinned provisions. But it is not a very desirable place to stop at, and the situation of the hotel, in the middle of the village, is not pleasant, whilst the fishing, already inferior to that obtainable in the Jolster Lake, is likely to greatly deteriorate every year, owing to the poaching proclivities of the inhabitants, among whom the landlord himself is the principal offender.

The scenery on the Bredheim Lake is indeed grand and imposing, and its gloomy and even awful aspect makes it distinct from that of the other lakes I visited; but a perpetual vision of gaunt precipices and dark forests and black waters becomes monotonous in course of time, and one longs for the brighter shores and surroundings of the Jolster Lake. Perhaps the Bredheim would be more inviting in sunny weather, but it was not my fortune to see it under such favourable circumstances.

From Red I turned back in rainy weather to Skei, and fortunately came in for a fine week there, during which I had several good days' fishing, and was fortunate in killing a six-pound trout, which was landed after a quarter of an hour's play.

There are said to be some immense trout in

these great lakes, and fish well over thirty pounds have certainly been caught; whilst tradition has it that a seventy-pounder was netted in a lake near Ferde Hafstadt. The lakes are of great depth, and it may be conjectured that some monsters of the deep lie at the bottom, many fathoms below the surface. For good fishing one cannot do better than stay at the hotel at Skei, as the Jolster Lake is sure to afford excellent sport with both fly and minnow. There are three or four small lakes in the vicinity of Skei, but they do not appear to contain many fish of a good size. There is also a small river running into the Bredheim Lake at Ferde, but the fish in it are not large, and in seven miles of it I caught only three or four trout worth keeping.

Another day spent at Nedre Vasenden was not productive of much sport, and the remaining week of my stay was entirely spoilt by a deluge of rain, which poured incessantly. On the return journey I again visited the Viks Lake near Sande, and fished all day in the pouring rain, killing some twenty-eight trout, but none of them much over half a pound in weight.

On the whole, from an angler's point of view, the expedition cannot be said to have been entirely a success, except for the sport obtained at the Skei end of the Jolster Lake. But the country is one full of interest, with grand scenery, probably unsurpassed in Europe, and with novel surroundings and few discomforts. The traveller cannot fail to be attracted by the character of the people, who, although quiet, and even morose, are simple and

honest, and contrast favourably with other Continental nations. The long and sunless winter doubtless affects the temperament of the people, and in a country with such a climate one cannot expect to find the inhabitants as gay and joyous as those who live in brighter lands.



PRINTED BY MORRISON AND GIBB LIMITED, EDINBURGH

SELECTIONS FROM MR. EDWARD ARNOLD'S LIST.

WILD NORWAY.

With Chapters on the Swedish Highlands, Jutland, and Spitzbergen. By ABEL CHAPMAN, Author of "Wild Spain," etc. With 17 full-page Illustrations and numerous smaller ones by the Author and CHARLES WHYMPER. Demy 8vo, 16s.

A MINGLED YARN.

The Autobiography of Edward Spencer Mott (NATHANIEL GUBBINS), Author of "Cakes and Ale," etc. One Volume, large crown 8vo, 12s. 6d.

THROUGH UNKNOWN AFRICAN COUNTRIES.

The First Expedition from Somaliland to Lake Rudolf and Lamu. A narrative of Scientific Exploration and Sporting Adventures. By A. DONALDSON SMITH, M.D., F.R.G.S. With nearly 30 full-page Plates and numerous smaller Illustrations by A. D. M'CORMICK, CHARLES WHYMPER, etc., and detailed Maps of the countries traversed. Super royal 8vo, One Guinea net.

THE EXPLORATION OF THE CAUCASUS.

By DOUGLAS W. FRESHFIELD, lately President of the Alpine Club and Honorary Secretary of the Royal Geographical Society. With Contributions by H. W. HOLDER, J. G. COCKIN, H. WOOLLEY, M. DE DECHY, and Prof. BONNEY, D.Sc., F.R.S. Illustrated by 3 Panoramas, 74 full-page Photogravures, about 140 Illustrations in the text, chiefly from Photographs by VITTORIO SELLA, and 4 Original Maps, including the first authentic map of the Caucasus, specially prepared from unpublished sources by Mr. FRESHFIELD. In Two Volumes, large 4to, 600 pp., Three Guineas net.

IN AND BEYOND THE HIMALAYAS.

A Record of Sport and Travel. By S. J. STONE. late Deputy Inspector-General of the Punjab Police. With 16 full-page Illustrations by CHARLES WHYMPER. Demy 8vo, 16s.

THROUGH THE SUB-ARCTIC FOREST.

A Record of a Canoe Journey for 4000 miles, from Fort Wrangel to the Pelly Lakes, and down the Yukon to the Behring Sea. By WARBURTON PIKE, Author of "The Barren Grounds of Canada." With Illustrations by CHARLES WHYMPER, from Photographs taken by the Author, and a Map. Demy 8vo, 16s.

FIFTY YEARS' REMINISCENCES OF INDIA.

By Lieut.-Colonel POLLOK, Author of "Sport in Burmah." Illustrated by A. C. CORBOULD. Demy 8vo, 16s.

ON VELDT AND FARM.

In Cape Colony, Bechuanaland, Natal, and the Transvaal. By FRANCES M'NAB. With Map. Crown 8vo, 300 pages, 3s. 6d.

LONDON: EDWARD ARNOLD, 37 BEDFORD STREET, STRAND.

SELECTIONS FROM MR. EDWARD ARNOLD'S LIST.

FIRE AND SWORD IN THE SUDAN.

By SLATIN PASHA. Translated and Edited by Colonel WINGATE, C.B., Chief of the Intelligence Department, Egyptian Army. A New, Revised, and Cheaper Edition of this famous work. Illustrated. Price 6s. In this edition the book has been thoroughly revised by the authors, omitting certain matters of temporary interest, and making it as far as possible a standard work of permanent value for young and old. The striking Illustrations by Mr. TALBOT KELLY have been retained. Also, the complete work, demy 8vo, One Guinea.

WITH THE BRITISH MISSION TO MENELIK, 1897.

By Count GLEICHEN, Captain Grenadier Guards, Intelligence Officer to the Mission. With numerous Illustrations by the Author and a Map. Demy 8vo, 16s.

SOLDIERING AND SURVEYING IN BRITISH EAST AFRICA, 1891–1894.

An Account of the Survey for the Uganda Railway, and the various Campaigns in the British Protectorate during the last few years. By Major J. R. MACDONALD, R.E. Illustrated from Sketches and Photographs by the Author, and numerous Plans and a Map. Demy 8vo, 16s.

THE BRITISH MISSION TO UGANDA.

By the late Sir GERALD PORTAL, K.C.M.G. Edited by RENNELL RODD, C.M.G. With an Introduction by the Right Honourable Lord CROMER, G.C.M.G. Illustrated from Photographs taken during the Expedition by Colonel RHODES. Demy 8vo, 21s.

MY MISSION TO ABYSSINIA.

By the late Sir GERALD H. PORTAL, C.B. With Map and Illustrations. Demy 8vo, 15s.

THE LAND OF THE NILE SPRINGS.

By Colonel Sir HENRY COLVILE, K.C.M.G., C.B., recently British Commissioner in Uganda. With Photogravure Frontispiece, 16 full-page Illustrations, and 2 Maps. Demy 8vo, 16s.

WITH KELLY TO CHITRAL.

By Lieutenant W. G. L. BEYNON, D.S.O., 3rd Goorkha Rifles, Staff Officer to Colonel Kelly with the Relief Force. With Maps, Plans, and Illustrations. Demy 8vo, 7s. 6d.

PERSIA REVISITED.

With Remarks on H.I.M. Mozuffer-ed-Din Shah, and the Present Situation in Persia (1896). By General Sir T. E. GORDON, K.C.I.E., C.B., C.S.I., formerly Military Attaché and Oriental Secretary to the British Legation at Teheran, Author of "The Roof of the World," etc. With full-page Illustrations. Demy 8vo, 10s. 6d.

LONDON: EDWARD ARNOLD, 37 BEDFORD STREET, STRAND.


00056757

Digitized with financial assistance from

Hermès India

a project facilitated by the Rotary Club of Bombay

on 12 April, 2019